Some Permanent Values

in

JUDAISM

Some Permanent Values in JUDAISM

Four Lectures

by

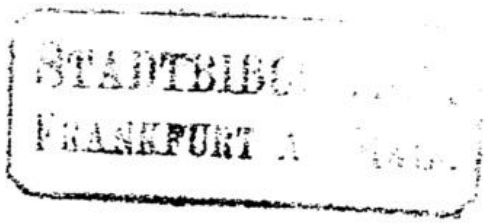
ISRAEL ABRAHAMS

Reader in Talmudic, University of Cambridge
Visiting Lecturer, Jewish Institute of Religion
New York

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1924

Jud.
4672

Oxford University Press
London Edinburgh Glasgow Copenhagen
New York Toronto Melbourne Cape Town
Bombay Calcutta Madras Shanghai
Humphrey Milford Publisher to the UNIVERSITY



Printed in England

52/172 x 2

PREFATORY NOTE

THESE four lectures were spoken at the Jewish Institute of Religion, in New York, early in 1923. They are printed almost exactly as spoken. Prepared from week to week, in trains and under stress of other work, without ready access to libraries, the lectures suffer both from hasty composition and imperfect references. The author is confident that they will be judged leniently in relation to the conditions under which he was forced to write. And though it would have been possible to revise the lectures for the present English edition, it seemed unwise to do more than introduce a very few corrections. Certain illustrations more appropriate to an American audience than to English readers have been left unchanged.

At the suggestion of the Institute's President, Dr. Stephen S. Wise, the lectures are published in place of the course of Lewisohn Lectures, delivered (also in New York) ten years ago. The subjects of the two courses are not identical. But the aims were the same: to offer some thoughts on the influence of past on present in Jewish religious thought. The author has consented to the publication of the present course, not because he thinks the lectures are valuable as solutions

of the problems raised, but because he conceives that the problems themselves are of some importance to Judaism. The lectures were primarjly intended for liberals, but it is hoped that the attitude to conservatism is not unsympathetic. Naturally, the four topics selected are not exhaustive, while the treatment is brief and unsystematic. But the course had to be limited to four addresses of an hour each.

CONTENTS

I PAGE

The Permanent Value of Primitive Ideas 1

II

The Permanent Value of Apocalypse . 21

III

The Permanent Value of Philo . . 43

IV

The Permanent Value of the Talmud 67

I

THE PERMANENT VALUE OF PRIMITIVE IDEAS

At the outset it is desirable to explain the limited aim of this short Course of Lectures. In one sense there is no need to expound or defend the abiding significance of the great Jewish records of the past. Indeed, such exposition or defence may amount to patronage or impertinence. In particular, the Hebrew Bible stands outside and beyond our questionings. Apart from its literary splendour, what it was in itself, what it has meant and means for the world, is written not only in the history of Israel and of mankind, but is impressed also on the living experience of humanity to-day. The Bible remains the spiritual home of the West. And if a thing of beauty is a joy for ever, this Bible of ours, wherein is enshrined the beauty of holiness, has an assured immortality among the lovelinesses of heaven and earth.

To a lesser degree the same is true of the other three topics which will occupy us. There is a compelling fascination in the apocalypses, visions of the end, dreams which have recurred in the course of man's struggle to realize his destiny. As literature they have a unique quality. There is nothing quite like them. And not merely their uniqueness guarantees their permanent place, for as solid contributions to man's understanding of himself and of history their vitality is hardly open to dispute. Again and again they have inspired poets and seers, and if they have sometimes

added folly to the 'calculators of ends' under war stress, they have also given inspiration to mystic artist-poets such as William Blake in more restful epochs. Similarly with Philo. His positive leadership in thought was so compelling, at all events for a limited period while the West was passing out of paganism, that his place in the hierarchy of constructive philosophers, his permanent value in the progress of human thought, is at least as firmly defined as is that of Plotinus. With regard to the Talmud, to doubt its permanent value is the mark, shall I say of the Christian pharisee, of the Jewish philistine? The Talmud is one of the most stupendous, if also one of the most grotesque, products of human genius, of human genius permeated, moreover, with that prophetic touch which finds its most abundant and most appealing expression in works inspired by Judaism and compiled by Jews. To subtract the Talmud from the world's store, would be to despoil that store of not the least precious of its treasures.

Hence, when I ask you to consider with me certain permanent values, I am entitled to take a good deal for granted. I am entitled to expect you to understand that if I were making out first lines of defence, I should direct your attention to outstanding values, to indisputable merits, to those aspects of Biblical, Apocalyptic, Philonean, and Rabbinic literature, which make up the main account of these outputs of the Hebrew spirit. Such a defence would be as easy, as I have already indicated it is superfluous. It would, I say, be easy to praise, and I am not concerned to praise what stands above praise.

But I am concerned with certain considerations which have long been to me, and I believe to others, sources of serious anxiety. These considerations are not the

same with regard to the four topics before us. To avoid wearying you with a longer introduction, I will go straight to the first of them. It is not the great ideas of the Bible that trouble us; those great ideas console, guide, strengthen us; they do not trouble us. What we live by, what our fathers lived by—this is patent. But what of those things by which our fathers lived and we live no longer? What, in short, shall we say of those aspects which we have come, in the light of criticism and comparative science, to regard as the smaller ideas of the Bible? These do trouble us. And why?

We come here up against a more general problem, the problem of primitive ideas. What is this problem? I think that it has been the modern motive of more pessimism than any other. I use the word modern, because it has been in modern times, and under the impulse of modern science, that the motive has become so much more insistent. This motive may be briefly explained. Geology brought to light fossils of an unsuspected mass of extinct creatures; so many dead and lost products of existence. But worse still were all the grim savageries of the struggle for existence revealed in an unprecedented horror by the Darwinian theories. We know how all this spectacle affected the Victorian humanists. Sometimes the poet would spend much hysterical sentiment on the victims of nature's callousness and ferocity. To cite an illustration which I owe to James Sully, Elizabeth Barrett Browning has these lines in *Aurora Leigh*:

> It had
> Not much consoled the Mastodons to know
> Before they went to fossil, that anon
> Their form would quicken with the Elephant;
> They were not Elephants, but Mastodons.

This is somewhat overstrained sympathy for the Mastodon. Had I been a metaphysical Mastodon, I fancy that I might have found some comfort in the knowledge that I should die to give birth to something superior. But Tennyson came nearer to a true sentiment and sympathy when he raved at 'Nature red in tooth and claw'. The waste of life under Nature's fierce ravenings was a shrieking nightmare, monstrous, discordant.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil!

Here you have sheer if unconscious pessimism. When hope of an answer or redress is relegated to the mysterious somewhere behind the veil, to an uncharted state hereafter, the poet has lost belief in the earth that perforce lies explored here, in front of the veil. And though Tennyson conceived himself an optimist, the inference is clear—Behold life's waste, and despair of a theory of life. Waste, waste, waste! Things have grown even worse since the mid-Victorian period, for biologists tell us that though the Darwinian premise of a struggle for existence may be true, the Darwinian conclusion of the origin of species by natural selection is false. There is not even that much comfort in it. The mastodon went to fossil without even quickening with the elephant.

Now I am not concerned with the scientific aspect of the problem, nor am I qualified to discuss it. But this much I am concerned with, this much I feel competent to assert: Waste there may be in physical nature, waste there is not in the realm of the spirit. Do you point to age after age of primitive ideas and low

ideals, to generation after generation born and dying in what we term darkness, to the wearisome passing of tribe upon tribe of savage livers of savage lives, of countless aeons of superstitions and the superstitious, of long-drawn-out epochs of cruelty and inhumanity? And do you infer that here, too, was waste? To believe this would make me a pessimist indeed. It is not satisfying to point to man's rise from lower things in evidence of his progress. The discarded stepping-stones are what cause us concern. The greater our advance, the deeper the tragedy of our predecessors' backwardness. But I do not believe this. I do not believe in spiritual waste. Not only were there high civilizations under primitive ideas, but the primitive ideas themselves are not altogether obsolete. They have left their mark, their mark perhaps for evil, but their mark also for good. And it is of these permanent values for good that I wish to speak. Let who will speak of the evil, my theme is of the good. I am on the side of the Angels.

I was long ago led to this line of thought by a wonderful passage in an ancient Jewish book, and an equally wonderful passage in a medieval Jewish book. But I set it aside, fearing it was possibly a sophistical, or at all events a paradoxical, attitude of mind. Then there came support from a powerful source. Sir J. G. Frazer, author of the *Golden Bough*, is a man of letters as well as an anthropologist of the first rank. He has an aptitude for poetical titles, witness the *Golden Bough* itself. *Psyche's Task* is another case in point. In the classical myth, the hard-pressed butterfly beauty was set to sort out, into separate heaps, a measureless mound of mixed barley and millet and beans and the rest. Aghast was Psyche, until the industrious ants did the sorting

for her. Milton, quoted by Frazer, has this splendid thought in his *Areopagitica*: 'Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds, which were imposed on Psyche as an incessant labour to cull out and sort asunder, were not more intermixt.' Frazer sets about culling the good from the evil intermixed in all the stages of human progress. He describes his book as a plea for superstition, though he finally condemns superstition to death. He takes some of the main institutions which are generally regarded as essential to civilization; orderly government, security of property, the sanctity of marriage, respect for human life, and he argues that all these institutions were at certain times and among certain races strengthened by primitive ideas and superstitions. The beliefs in the irresistible magic of a ruler, in the efficacy of taboo to injure a thief, in the evil effects of adultery in decreasing the fertility of fields, in the awesome vindictiveness of the ghost of a murdered man—all these primitive ideas or superstitions had a direct influence in strengthening respect for order, personal rights, marriage, and human life. But these institutions are 'the pillars on which rests the whole fabric of civil society. Shake them, and you shake society to its foundations'.

This contention, that low culture may help forward high ideals, is supported by Frazer with adequate evidence. Of itself, the contention is important as it to some extent justifies the low culture; it suggests that this low culture was not waste culture. But I am

not satisfied with this, I am not content to leave the matter there. It is not enough to feel that primitive ideas made way to advanced ideas, as the poetess thought that the actual mastodon made way for the elephant. To me the permanent value of primitive ideas lies rather in this : they not only prepared the way for higher ideas, but they left their impress on those higher ideas ; rise as we will, there is always residue of the primitive left ; the higher ideas would be different but for that residue ; and not only different but worse. It is the primitive in the advanced that gives the advanced its flavour. It is the abiding, indelible, eternal survival of the past in the present that binds the generations in a true tradition, that makes the present livingly adaptable to conditions of life, that in brief makes our institutions and ideals human-natural, if I may coin that very necessary adjective. We speak of human nature, why not of the human-natural ?

I shall make no attempt to prove this generalization, especially as regards the four instances chosen by Frazer. My argument will deal not with economic or social problems, but with religious, and within that limitation briefly. My time-canvas is too restricted for a picture on a large scale. Put bluntly, Judaism is the richer and better, and more human, because, while it has long passed out of anything like a primitive stage, primitive stages are still present and active in it. This is the virtue of an historical religion. The traces of history are never obliterated. For instance, we could conceivably formulate a more purely ethical, a more absolutely philosophical monotheism than ours, but it would be a monotheism of the head not of the heart, of theory not of experience. God might be the First Cause, but

he would not be the Father. In that trite illustration I have stated my case. If Judaism had not gone through stages in which God was conceived anthropomorphically, we could not commune with Him as we now can. The God of the Jew is not the God of the metaphysician, He is the God of experience. Many of the qualities attributed to Him at the various stages of that experience remain attached to our conception of Him still, sublimated but unmistakably there. Ours is not a God of Ethical Culture, or of theoretical Unitarianism, or of any brand-new nostrum. O how worn-out, how obsolete the brand-new would be! Ours is a God of history, and in our conception of Him, our love of Him, our obedience to Him, our history lives and speaks; primitive ideas are still active, informing our present conception with past values.

I now invite you to consider with me the two passages, one from an ancient, the other from a medieval Jewish book, to which I referred above. The one passage might have given Frazer a text for his social anthropology, the other led me years ago to the epigram that in religious ideas or institutions or ceremonial, what matters is not so much Past Origins as Present Values. Years ago, Morris Jastrow wrote to me approving this epigram; he pressed me to give some authority for it; to develop the idea in more detail. 'Your maxim—not Past Origins but Present Values', he wrote, 'is a principle on which Judaism may not only be historically justified, but permanently evaluated.'

'And God saw all that He had made and behold it was very good' (Gen. i. 31). The Midrash (by what method of exegesis we need not inquire) includes in the verdict *good* the *yeser hara*—man's evil impulses—in this

context we may even say his lower nature. 'Is then the *yeser hara*, man's primitive instinct, very good?' Well, be that as it may, the Rabbi continues: 'Were it not for the *yeser hara*, the lower primitive desires, a man would neither build a house, nor marry a wife, nor (as one version adds) seek gain of trade, nor (adds another version) continue to propagate his kind, so that the world would not be upheld.' (See Genesis Rabba ix; the Yalkut on the text; and the Midrash on Psalm xlii). The actual significance of this passage is not quite clear. But it amounts certainly to this much: Man's lower instincts lead to high ends. As another Rabbi expresses it, had it not been for early man's sin, the human race would have been angelic and thus earth static in its inhabitants, for angels neither die nor reproduce their kind (Aboda Zara, 5*a*). It is not with these Rabbis as with Tennyson, wonderful as the poet's vision is:

> O yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill—

The good is not in the vague 'somehow': it is here and now, it is seen before the final goal is reached, before the pile is complete; it is seen in the very foundation of social order and sexual morality as they were and are. It is not Frazer's superstition which in certain ages and certain races has strengthened these pillars of civilization. It is the enduring primitive in us which founded and which maintains them. If we are, as cynics say, still primitive, we have the quality as well as the defects of our persistent kinship to the savage. This is an optimistic thought for two reasons. First it gives the primitive its place in progress, and secondly, it justifies the continuance of the primitive in us, the continued influence of the passions and conceptions

which date from the beginnings of time and will survive to time's end. And as these passions and conceptions are permanent, it is well that they are permanent for good as well as for evil.

But there is another side, illustrated by the other passage to which I have more than once alluded. The Permanent Value of the primitive depends upon the present value we extract from it. Past origins are important to the historian ; present values are important to the moralist. And so I will quote a remarkable Response of Maimonides, written late in the twelfth century (Response 160, ed. Leipzig, i, p. 34). He had been asked for an opinion concerning certain Moslem rites, among them their curious method of prostration at prayer, during which they place themselves in a sitting posture and then throw the body forward until the face touches the ground. True, says Maimonides, this was once an obscene posture, growing out of adoration by exposure of parts of the naked body. But though this be its origin, this is not its significance now. No Moslem is thinking of such origins, but his heart is directed to Heaven. Out of an obscene prostration, he adds, has come a symbolized humility in the approach to the Deity. Hence Maimonides refuses to call this a superstition, although it is literally a survival. The beauty of the present value has obliterated the ugliness of the past origin. Conversely, of course, a beautiful past origin will not suffice to give vitality to that which has failed to retain a present value, or does not offer reasonable hope that it will recover the present value it has lost. The older Primitive may have a permanent value, while the older advanced thought may not. Present Value is the deciding test in both cases.

It is a common observation that a wild flower improved under cultivation, like the violet, may reduce its fragrance; just as a fruit, improved under cultivation, like the strawberry, may reduce its flavour. The fragrance and the flavour that remain are even traceable to the primitive flower and fruit. This metaphor may be applied to my present theme. Take that very advanced conception, prayer. It originated in magic formulas, in a ritual attempt to compel an unwilling and malevolent power to mitigate its hostility. I will not call this primitive element in prayer either sweet flavour or pleasant fragrance. But it made the prayer very real, the magician was much in earnest, and he undoubtedly expected to succeed by his flesh-cuttings or his spells or his dances. Now this magical element in prayer has survived to our own time. Sometimes it takes the form of emotional abandonment, sometimes of subconscious expectancy, sometimes of asceticism, sometimes of happy adoration. What would prayer be without its fears, its fasts, its hopes, its songs? The past is near us, not far off, and we do well to enjoy it, retaining its honey-sweet, rejecting its poison-sting. Shall we indeed say to the primitive as to the bee in the proverb, neither your honey nor your sting? Nay, like the Rabbi of old, we can rather try to keep the one and to avoid the other. We can and must refuse to be fettered by rusty formulas, but can and must consent to turn to our own use those feelings of human necessity and divine responsiveness which the formulas sought to pack into a narrow act of devotion. The husk of the formulas may be dry, the kernel inside still moist. But kernel and husk must be cast off together, if both are rotten.

Or let us take an idea which has become a central

motive in Judaism—the idea of holiness. It is a primitive idea, associated with physical fears and taboos, but it developed very nobly and spiritually. Holiness is a supreme quality of the soul, it is a spiritual fastidiousness, a rejection of the foul in favour of the fine, a leaning and a longing toward cleanliness and purity. But out of the developed idea of holiness, can we reject the primitive idea of physical avoidance of taboo and contamination? Holiness, in fact, retains and must retain its horror of physical uncleanness. Men and women must be clean through and through—clean in heart and hand, in mind and body—and Judaism will have lost a large part of its own special and original appeal on the day when marital chastity and sexual continence and dietary temperance, aye, and material health-seeking—on the day when these physical, primitive qualities are abstracted from the spiritual and developed idea of holiness. Holiness is consecration to the magnificent task of the Imitation of God, the model of holiness, once the man-like Model to primitive man and woman, now the spiritual Model to the most cultured Jew and Jewess. The idea of the Model could never have arisen except in an anthropomorphic milieu. Holiness without the primitive physical, human element would even now be a shadow without substance. Here, assuredly, the primitive has its abiding value. The primitive did not pass and die to give birth to something better; it endured and lived on to give that something better a flavour and a fragrance able to nourish and to refresh.

If this is so with a fundamental principle of Judaism as it affects the individual life, the case is similar with another fundamental principle of Judaism as it affects

the community. God, as conceived by primitive Israel, started off as a family, a tribal, a national God, thence broadening out as a universal God. This universalism is not only essential to Judaism, it is the creation of Judaism. This is not the place to discuss Greek religion or any other ancient system which had its share in convincing men of the existence of one God and of one humanity. When I claim this principle as the creation of Judaism, I mean the principle as it passed over from the Hebrew prophets into the idealism of Western religion. It is beyond dispute that as the Western world now recognizes the unity of God and the kinship of man, it owes its recognition to Judaism. The sects have been slower perhaps to recognize the principle than have been thinkers who have phrased their thought in non-religious terms. Universalism is still far from accepted by the sects. I doubt whether any extant religion is universal in the true, the pragmatic sense. But all religions, Judaism included, pride themselves on their universalism. And rightly so. God fulfils himself in many ways, but it is and must be the one and same God. The Jewish hope is that all the world will come to serve Him, acknowledging His sole rule, all men proclaiming their common kinship with Him and with each other.

But the advanced universalism of Judaism, the universalism of the Western world, grew out of primitive nationalism. What is the result? I limit myself to Judaism in answering this question. The result has been that Jewish universalism has never lost, perhaps never can lose, the touch—some may say the taint—of its nationalism. I am not now referring at all to nationalism in the Zionistic sense, for that is quite another problem, involving politics at least as much as

it involves religion, and my present subject is religion and not politics. Hence I will not even consider in general the influence of political nationalism on the cosmopolitan ideal. What I do suggest is that the primitive idea of the family or national God remains with us in our advanced idea of the universal God, and remains with us not entirely for evil. I doubt whether Israel could ever have reached the love of God through the direct route of universalism. A child loves its father because that father is in reality its own. Love particularizes before it generalizes. In the relations of husband and wife, the truest affection is the love of one for one. This is the moral of the Biblical Song of Songs; it is the moral of the Song which each of us still sings. And more than this. When a generous human being finds room in his heart for the love of all men, his brothers, then he generalizes; *after* he generalizes his love, he again particularizes it, reserving as it were a double portion of its spirit for his nearest and dearest. So with Israel and God. Again and again, Israel's love and God's is expressed in terms of betrothal. Very primitive this, altogether inconsistent with our developed conception of God and man. But love is not logic, and religion is not a system of philosophy. God was Israel's beloved, Israel God's. This gave a depth, a warmth to the relationship. And this depth and warmth remain to deepen and warm us whenever we address God as the God of our fathers, rather than as the God of all men. Take away the particularism and you destroy the universalism. The love of God, like the love of a human father, begins at home. I feel akin to the world most when I am at home with my own personal Father. And when I am in the world, and glow with sympathy

for all humanity, it is the love that I brought with me from my home into the world that fires the glow, and I return home to gain fresh fuel for the flame of humanism. Israel and God! The fellowship, the affection, the mutual obligations of covenant and obedience, the faithfulness unbroken by recurrent sin, unbroken, too, in the recurrent experiences of the divine pity—all this is Israel's heritage, not in spite of, but because of, the primitive idea of God as the lover and teacher and sustainer of the family, the tribe, the nation, because of the idea of God as the custodian of Israel, as the sleepless watcher over his darling's sleep. In all this wealth of love, in Israel's age-long response to it, in Israel's fidelity under drawn-out oppression (for it is no vain boast in the 44th Psalm: 'All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee, neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant'), in Israel's flight from a false brother's frown in the world to a true Father's smile in the home—in all this I seem to trace the Permanent Value of a very Primitive Idea. Could we afford to cast out of our idea of God and Israel Jeremiah's alluring phrases: 'Thus saith the Lord unto Israel, I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown; . . . therefore my heart is moved for thee, and I will surely take pity on thee, saith the Lord.' How primitive is all this, how inconsistent with a metaphysical theory of God, but how tender and moving, old as the old world, new as the passing hour!

Moreover, as I shall perhaps have opportunity to mention again in the third lecture of this course, sometimes two primitive ideas may help each other to a far

from primitive end. It is primitive to think of God as close at hand, speaking to Moses face to face as a man to his fellow; it is primitive to place God in a local heaven, above the earth, for science has left us no room for any divine seat in the skies. Yet these two primitive ideas in interaction gave us in Judaism on the one hand the immanent God, on the other the transcendental. No form of Judaism can exist without both conceptions, the nearness of God and His distance. Religions which seek to accept either alternative exclusively must end in pantheism or in mysticism. A touch of both is needed in religion; but religion cannot be founded completely on either.

These illustrations, to which it would be easy to add, must suffice, I will not say in demonstration of my thesis, but at all events in explanation of it. There was little if any spiritual waste. The lower did not perish in the birth of the higher, but persisted. Note further that the persistence was not due to rationalization or secularization. The primitive is the permanent. Would that it were more all-pervasive in some directions! Thus the sin of the census which plagued David's generation ought to plague ours, if in processional pride we forget recessional humility. And how we could have wished that the primitive cult of sacred trees had so far survived among modern Arabs as to have rescued Judea from its present treelessness! Yet one hardly desires that type of preservation of the primitive which I saw in a Sicilian village, where, embedded in the newly built walls of a brand-new villa, were fragments of masonry pilfered from an old near-by crusaders' castle. It is not as though a genuine sentiment entered, as when a Palestinian stone is introduced to a modern

Jewish building. A good deal of the survival of ancient rite, in Judaism as in other systems, is of the former type; the relic of the primitive may make the modern structure, be it church or temple, a grotesque receiver of stolen goods which it has not the wit to appropriate gracefully. And I do not deny that some people have queer notions, I have queer notions myself no doubt, as to what ought or ought not to be consciously preserved from the primitive as possessing permanent value. As a rule, the process is not a conscious one; it may be the consciousness of a group working subconsciously that decides. Psyche's task in actual history is not the work of a calculating selector. The mixed and confused seeds of good and evil have a way of sorting themselves out.

One caution seems necessary before I close. We must be on our guard against perceiving primitive origins when they do not exist. And this in two ways. We ought not to ante-date modern customs, or to imagine for instance that every tune we hear in a synagogue is a relic of ancient Jewish music. One now well-known synagogue melody is often described as 'traditional', when it was composed by Mr. Mombach in my presence and at my suggestion less than half a century ago. There are many modern innovations in the orthodox synagogues of the novelty of which those synagogues are happily unaware. And just as the liberals must not think every idea of theirs new, so the conservatives must not think every idea of theirs old. This is the first part of my caution.

Now, for the second proviso, which grows out of the first. We must not too readily seek primitive origins for things not primitive. I have already expressed my

thanks to Sir J. G. Frazer, and indeed I could not adequately tell how much I owe to him. But I cannot follow him in some of the conclusions as to origins which he elaborates in the three volumes of his highly original work, *Folklore in the Old Testament.* Let me select a single instance. 'Thou shall not seethe a kid in its mother's milk'—is a law that has an old-world, primitive look. But is it explained by Frazer's contention that it stands in line with a widespread primitive superstition that to boil a cow's milk makes the cow barren? The scripture does not ordain: Thou shalt not boil milk. The law may, as Maimonides and other Jewish authors suppose, have been rather directed *against* some idolatrous rite in accordance with which the kid was cooked in its own mother's milk. For myself, I believe that the law was humanitarian. This is no modern suggestion. It is as old as Philo, who by the way knew no more than our father Abraham's angelic visitors did of the dietary law against the simultaneous partaking of milk and meat. If, says Philo (ii. 399), you wish to boil meat with milk, there are cows enough the milk of which might be used. Keep cruelty out of your kitchen. You need not be so inhuman as to choose the very mother's own milk in which to cook her young. And just as we theologians must not discover a *halacha le-Moshe mi-sinai*, a Mosaic tradition, in everything we do, so I would have the anthropologists more chary of detecting the primitive in everything we believe.

If you tell me that my line of argument justifies many traditional customs, then I reply—the more the merrier! Life would have no end if every living age had to make a new beginning. Yet I trust that nothing that I have said has made you suspect me of devotion to the cult of the past. I may be a romantic, but I am no

worshipper of the dead. On the contrary, would that more of the primitive were dead and buried, scattered free to the winds, not even surviving in urn or mummy-case! Wars and the rumours of wars, tribal antipathies which disguise themselves as patriotisms, superstitions that terrorize without inspiring, obsolete dogmas that masquerade as living faith—these are not viatica, they are impedimenta. And the same, less obtrusively, is true of all survivals which obstruct the progressive and do not help the conservative. The truly obsolete—the primitive idea, custom, passion, which has no present value and no prospect of winning future value—must be scrapped. But much that has survived is not thus worthless. This type has a present value which seems to guarantee its future life. The present value may consist in the eternal validity of what the past has handed down—noble example nobly set, grand truth grandly formulated. Or the present value may consist simply in the flavour and fragrance which the primitive, no longer active, has transmitted to modern life.

The past has its rights over us, the future will claim rights from us. In the meantime? It is our obvious duty to create rights, to enforce and originate present values. Moderns we are and in the present we live. And there is more than this. Made up as we are of heredity and aspiration, we are necessarily very composite creatures—part angel, part beast, the Rabbi of old termed us; part with tendency downwards, part with tendency upwards. The Oxford undergraduate's problem is much the same. Dropping into poetry, he humorously bemoans his state pathetic, for one-half his soul is philistine, the other half aesthetic. This is the fate of us all—we are all half-and-halfers—our character, our attainments. One-half of our soul has

its eye front, and only one-half. The other half has its eye back. I suggest, therefore, that it is well that the backward gaze is not altogether a gaze into the useless and the lost. I suggest that it is well that the backward gaze draws within its ken not entirely a waste, but a waste with here and there an oasis, a garden in which God once walked.

And even this is not all. The permanent value of the primitive consists sometimes, consists at its best, in just these elements of the primitive which primitive man himself failed to understand, failed to use. We can sometimes detect in man's early reachings out towards the good and the beautiful and the true, unrealized suggestions, which we may develop and realize. After a lapse of a thousand years, a verse of Sappho, dear to Rossetti, has a new attraction for us. There is a delightful figure in these fragmentary lines. The sentence is broken, but its meaning is whole. We are not sure what the poetess was thinking of in the other side of the comparison, but what is left is enough to charm and intrigue. Here are her broken words: '. . . like the sweet apple which glows red on the top-most branch, and the apple-gatherers forgot it—nay, forgot it not, but could not come to it.' Out of our fathers' reach were sweet fruits on the top-most branches of the Tree of Life. They saw them, but could not come to them. Is our vision as keen as theirs to see them, is our stature higher than theirs, our reach longer to attain them? Perhaps it is, while we sit open-eyed on their shoulders, encircled and upheld by their arms. So may we behold and come to the fruits which they saw but failed to grasp, and from the evergreen of the primitive snatch values high as the highest of the values of life.

II

THE PERMANENT VALUE OF APOCALYPSE

In my youth it was a heavy blow to be told that modern Jewish theologians were inclined to discredit Apocalypses. I loved Daniel, the first and the best of them. My affection for it had begun when, as a boy, I was enthralled by that finest of all stories for boys—*Tom Brown's Schooldays*. In this tale of Rugby under Arnold, a group of lads, engaged on their lessons, contrast the easy-going Naaman with Daniel's tougher companions. Captain Naaman had just been healed by Elisha. 'There is no God in all the earth, but in Israel', cries the grateful Syrian, and to Him alone would he thenceforth offer sacrifice. But—he pleads to be held excused when he bows down, at his royal master's side, in the House of Rimmon. Shall we condemn him? 'Elisha said unto him, go in peace.' Does this mean that the prophet made allowance for human weakness, for the temptation that assails us all to try to worship God and Rimmon simultaneously? Or does it mean that Elisha washed his hands of Naaman, as he had washed Naaman of his leprosy?

We need not decide. But what we can decide is that Daniel's comrades took the braver course. 'Bow down to the image that I have set up, or burn in the fiery furnace', cried Nebuchadnezzar. 'Who is that God that can deliver you out of my hand?' Then follows one

of the most manly passages in the Old Testament, and there are many manly passages in it. 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego said unto the King: We have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it so be, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. *But if not*, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy god, nor worship the golden image which thou has set up.' In this clause, *but if not*, we hear the true heroic note. Scarcely in early literature is this note elsewhere so surely struck. It is struck in Esther's courage of despair. 'If I perish, I perish,'—and fine the queen's constancy is; fine too is Job's protestation—'Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.' Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego neither despair nor protest. They put the case hypothetically, but their determination is absolute.

I have said that this note, *but if not*, is scarcely to be paralleled in ancient literature, though Philo nearly sounds it. It is, however, to be heard more than once in the verses of a living writer, whose style wavers between doggerel and poetry. Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If—' reveals him at his best in one of his best moods.

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master,
  If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
  And treat these two impostors just the same—
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
  Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
  And stoop and build 'em up again with worn-out tools—

And in similar strain this masterpiece continues, until the final moral is reached:

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
  With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the earth and everything that 's in it,
  And what is more—you'll be a Man, my son !

The strongest thought here seems to me the heroic superiority to triumph or disaster. The true knight in a yet more beautiful poem of Kipling's is also indifferent to success or failure. The lovely ' Ode to the True Romance '—

> Thy face is far from this our war
> Our call and counter-cry,

ends off in a haunting stanza :

> Yet may I look with heart unshook
> On blow brought home or missed—
> Yet may I hear with equal ear
> The clarions down the List ;
> Yet set my lance above mischance
> And ride the barriere—
> Oh, hit or miss, how little 'tis,
> My lady is not there !

Romance is not there, but another figure replaces her —Destiny, divinely robed. I will not attempt an Apocalyptic description of her: I might make her repellent, not alluring, for as we shall see, Apocalyptic symbolism is sometimes monstrously inartistic. But to hold triumph and disaster as impostors both, to ride the lists with equal heart, whether lance hit or miss, to force heart and sinew to serve you—I am continuing some of Kipling's thoughts—long after they are exhausted in the effort, and there is nothing left in you but the Will which says hold on—this is to be a knight and a man, this is to be a true son of Israel. And shall I not assert permanent value for the Apocalyptic book

which justifies this definition of the true Israel, an Israel that does not relax to-day because his world may end to-night ?

There is a stupendous implication in the *but-if-not* of Daniel's associates. They actually seem uncertain not only as to God's willingness, but even as to His ability, to save. Their unflinching constancy is all the more amazing. Daring is a note of Apocalypse which would attract our venturesome age, were it not that while we dare to doubt, we do not dare to do in spite of doubt. Take a further instance of daring in another Apocalypse. The Apocalypse of Ezra voices a doubt felt by certain of his age, the age which saw the loss of the Temple. Can the Law save ? Does virtue help ? Was Rome better than Judea ? Sinners all, helpless all, futile all, yet one triumphs and the other falls. But Ezra not only dares to doubt, he dares to do. Is the Law inadequate ? He rewrites it. Is this generation evil ? Evil will continue its domination until the number of the righteous is complete. So, too, the Rabbi also said that the Messiah will not come till every soul, predestined to birth, has been born. This is a genuine optimism. The still unborn and the long since dead are links in the chain leading from the first beginnings to the last end, from Adam to the Messiah. Continuity suggested to us a permanent value of primitive ideas, continuity suggests a permanent value of the Apocalypses.

But what are the Apocalypses, of which Daniel is the first and the best ? It is strange how often, in literary history, the first *is* the best. The Psalms are the best religious lyrics just as certainly as Daniel is the best Apocalypse. The word *apocalypse* simply means *disclosure*, or *revelation*, and the books so named disclose

or reveal the future, chiefly in visions. The final book of the New Testament is indifferently called the Apocalypse of St. John, or the Book of Revelation. Since the investigations of Vischer, the New Testament Apocalypse has been regarded by many (including the Jewish critic, Dr. K. Kohler, and the Christian, Dr. R. H. Charles) as a composition, originally Jewish, but made over by a Christian hand. Thus the first and the best of the Apocalypses—Daniel—and what is in the literary sense a good second to Daniel, and rises above it in the passion of its appeal—are both Jewish, like so many other works of similar type.

In a sense, all prophecy is *disclosure*. The Hebrew prophets all make disclosures, whether of the will of God in general or in particular as regards the social, moral, religious, and even political problems of the hour; or their disclosures may concern the future, with less concern for the existing state of affairs. There are in the prophets pictures of the end, 'anticipations of the final judgement and consummation of all things, as Isaiah xxiv–xxvii, Zachariah xiv, Joel iii. 9–17' (Driver). The writers of what are termed specifically Apocalypses or disclosures take up the promises and anticipations of the older prophets, restate them during epochs of tribulation and persecution, and seek to answer the question: How long will it be before the triumph arrive of Israel over his oppressors, the triumph of God over pagan rivals, of truth over falsehood?

These are questions of permanent importance. Every age ought to ask them anew. The answer given by the Apocalypses ought in large part to be obsolete. Their feature most worthy of obsolescence is their love for picturing the tortures of the ungodly as a foil to the

pleasures of the godly. The Apocalypses were exceeded by Dante and Milton in their vivid descriptions of hell, and what they conceive to be their luring descriptions of heaven. All this ought to be obsolete, though it is, alas! too permanent. The modern mind is still too ready to retain it all. With all my desire to detect permanent values, I can detect no such value in the Apocalyptic vision of the blessed and the damned, of the pit of torment and the bower of refreshment. But though this feature of the Apocalyptic answer to the question: *How long? To what End?* be obsolete, the question itself is not, nor the courage with which it was faced. Apocalypse deserves well of us by forcing the question on us and giving us an example of bravery in meeting it.

Right at the start we may note a characteristic of these Apocalypses which is almost universally treated as a defect, but which I regard as a virtue, as one of the chief grounds on which I would assign to them permanent value. What is the characteristic to which I refer? The Apocalypses do not profess to be direct divine messages. Monstrous figures the Apocalypses picture, but they are not themselves that most tasteless of monsters, apes of an older art. No 'Thus saith the Lord' reiterates in their sentences. They are for the most part visions, the author of which does not declare his identity. They are what is called pseudepigrapha, not so much anonymous as pseudonymous, that is to say, they are not so much nameless as presented under a false name. Some famous personage of the past, well-known in history or in legend, would be adopted as the hero of the vision, as the mouthpiece or recipient of the disclosure. Daniel himself was a real person, not a figure

of fiction. Similarly with Enoch, of whom Genesis tells us that ' he walked with God ', which was taken to mean that he was at once godly and possessed of godly knowledge. So the book of Enoch opens—' Enoch a righteous man, whose eyes were opened by God, saw the vision of the Holy One in the heavens, which the angels showed me (Enoch), and from them I heard everything, and from them I understood as I saw, but not for this generation, but for a remote one which is for to come.' So, too, Adam and Eve, the Twelve Patriarchs, Moses, Baruch, Ezra, John the Presbyter—all or nearly all historical figures—appear as the heroes of admonitions and of visions. This literary device was used by the authors to give weight to their messages, and to collect an audience for their moralizings. The authors do not profess, however, to be directly inspired. They do not claim, as the Hebrew prophets did, to come before Israel with a message straight from God. This we are told is their fault ; this, I hold, is their merit.

Prophecy, the direct and splendid inspiration of Israel, had ceased. Its place was taken by something less direct and less splendid. But we should not judge Apocalypse as a substitute for Prophecy. It was a continuation of it. Prophecy was bound to end if its value was not to end. If I may be permitted the paradox, next to its existence, the best thing for Prophecy was its cessation. Hebrew Prophecy lasted for something over three centuries—from the eighth to the fifth centuries B.C.—though later than that passages may have been added to some of the earlier prophetical books. Hebrew Prophecy, taken as a whole, was the most original and efficient expression of spiritual genius. But it had its term. If it had gone on indefinitely, what must have

happened ? It must have been vulgarized. The natural would have given way to the artificial, the original and the genuine to the imitation and counterfeit. False prophets actually arose under the historical limitations. Had the looms of Prophecy gone on producing, the fine fibre of Prophecy must have coarsened into shoddy. God seems to use His instruments economically. And Prophecy was a gift for rare and choice spirits, not a career for the professional or the over-strung, for the cheat or the self-deluded. By the Maccabean age, Prophecy had degraded itself into soothsaying and vaticination. In a Talmudic discussion of the late third century (Baba Bathra 12*a*), while the Sage is presented as the substitute for the Prophet, on the other hand, in its predictive sense, Prophecy (clearly in a sarcastic vein) is relegated to fools and children. When the Church founded itself on a rebirth of Prophecy, this phenomenon of degradation and degeneration of Prophecy recurred yet more noticeably. So intolerable were the self-constituted ' prophets ' in the early Church, that the bishops were forced to suppress them with a strong hand. I am dealing more completely with this subject elsewhere, but I hope that you will grant plausibility to my contention, that we ought to thank God both for the gift of the Hebrew Prophets and for bringing their sequence to an end. The cessation of Prophecy was the salvation of Prophecy. Prophecy had done its part in launching a work which had to be taken up by preachers and leaders, by philosophers and liturgists, by Rabbi and Bishop, and for a while by the writers of Apocalypse.

That the last named did not assume the prophetic manner is one of their claims to permanence. When the

voice of Prophecy ceased, nay while its voice was still being heard, this new genre of *revelation* arose. Because, while taking up Prophecy's work, it does it in a different fashion, it is a link in the continuous chain of Israel's spiritual history. As a moral driving force, Apocalypse falls far below Prophecy, far below Pharisaism. Yet its visions of the end are in the true vein, they show Good eventually triumphant, though Evil now rule. Evil has its day. Good will have eternity. And Israel will be there to see.

Apocalypse, like Prophecy, was not, however, destined to continue indefinitely. Apocalypses were written by Jews right through the Middle Ages. The Talmud and Midrashim retain some traces, and whole books of the Apocalyptic type were composed under stress of the Crusades. It was quite natural that after the calamitous expulsion from Spain, Don Isaac Abarbanel should turn again to Apocalypse and write a commentary on Daniel. But the great Apocalypses were composed much earlier, during a period rather shorter than the period covered by Prophecy. They are restricted to the period between the second century B. C. and the second century A. D. Only one Apocalypse got into the Hebrew canon, but so did only one love idyll. Why did the great age of the Apocalypses pass? Why did many Jews lose or never feel interest in them?

Professor Burkitt explains that the development of Judaism under Johanan ben Zakkai, after the destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70, was away from the Apocalyptic vision of the New Age. '*The Kingdom of God is at hand*,' he says, 'that was the Christian watchword. A New World, a wholly new state of things is on the point of arriving: watch and be ready, and above all do not

cumber yourselves with your old possessions, your old traditions, your old affections.' Rabbinic Judaism, on the other hand, while it certainly believed in the Good Time Coming, did not believe in its catastrophic arrival. The Good Time would come, but not as a sudden change, rather as a gradual unfolding. Probably a main difference between Judaism and Early Christianity lay in this difference. Expecting the New Age every morning, the Christian would every night dream the visions which foretold it. But the Jew made no such adventure into the near future. He went to bed sobered by the day's happenings, and was freer alike from the glamour and the delusion of intoxicating dreams as to what the morrow might bring forth. His duty was with the day's work. 'When, in the words of the Apocalypse of Baruch (written in the throes of the Temple's fall) nothing was left save the Mighty One and His Law, the Rabbi was ready to guide his brethren along such of the old paths as still they were permitted to tread, and to show them by precept and by example how to wait for the manifestation of the Sovereignty of God by taking upon themselves the Yoke and realizing God's Sovereignty within them.'

This is an attractive theory, though I should myself postpone the rise of it for another half century. The failure of Bar Cochba in 135 was a more serious blow to the Jews than was the destruction of the Temple in 70. When Titus's legionaries burned the Temple in 70, the rebuilding of the Temple was momentarily expected. Hence the blow was not so overwhelming as it might have been, and the Apocalyptic dream of the New Age was vividly real in every Judean heart. When Julius Severus defeated and slew Bar Cochba in 135, all hope of a speedy recovery of Judean independence was lost.

The blow this time was crushing. The New Age was perforce thrown forward, as the Prophets threw it forward. While it is a regular feature of the Apocalypses to represent the New Age as near, Pharisaism, dropping Apocalypse, returned to the Prophetic point of view. Facts are stubborn, and one of the finest qualities of Pharisaism was its sturdy facing of facts. Now the facts proved that the New Age was not near. To beguile people with the belief that the New Age was close at hand, to predict its exact hour, was to do more than delude or disappoint. When the predicted day came bringing no New Age with it, the masses despaired of the New Age altogether. Hence the Rabbi poured his anger and scorn on the 'Calculators of the End'. These false predictors, he said, destroy Israel's patience —Israel must learn to wait, to tarry the Lord's leisure. Israel grown impatient is an orphaned Israel indeed. O for a voice in our days to teach us the lesson of patience, as Rabbis Samuel ben Nachmeni and Jonathan taught the lesson of patience in their days! A blight fall on all calculators of the end, these Rabbis cried; rely rather on the promise of the older Prophet Habakkuk: 'And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it panteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not delay . . . and the righteous shall live by its faith.'

By his faith, that is, by his confidence. Apocalypse weakened that confidence when it based the confidence on immediate or speedy fulfilment of hope. The Synagogue prayed, and prays, for speedy fulfilment;

but it does not relax in its admonition to Israel to be steadfast, though fulfilment be far off. And yet Apocalypse was not without its influence in this very direction. For though it mostly connects itself with the end of the present age, it is also inspired by a sense of ultimate purpose. Apocalypse thus has a double value. Even as a 'calculation of the end' it was potent in emergencies. It grew up under the Syrian oppression, and Daniel, written when the present was very dark, not only foretold the end of the darkness, but strengthened Israel to bear it while it lasted. Daniel's prophecy of redemption came true most precisely and literally. Its three and a half years were the exact period of the Syrian oppression, overthrown as it was by Judas Maccabeus. It is undeniable that Daniel must have been a useful force to rouse the Maccabean determination, for his prediction was associated with models of courage of the *but if not* type. Such predictions as his, fortified by such heroic examples, have a way of fulfilling themselves. It is only when reliance is placed too mechanically on the occurrences of such quick returns that the apocalyptic firm becomes bankrupt.

But far more important is the apocalyptic conception of ultimate purpose. Here, as in most respects, Apocalypse falls far below Prophecy at its best. There is nothing in the Apocalypses to equal the splendid universalism of Isaiah, his portraiture of Israel as the Lord's servant, lamp in hand, a light to the nations. Nevertheless, it is to the Apocalypses that we owe the first ordered attempt towards a philosophy of history. Without some such philosophy the world is chaos. What of the great World War? Has it no meaning? It is to Apocalypse that we must turn for the answer.

That the drenched earth shall drink men's life-blood, and panic and pestilence and bondage rage, all this fits in to the ultimate accomplishment of purpose. Nothing fails of its appointed end, for over all the world the Spirit of God rules. The Lord of heaven, the Sovereign of earth, the one Existence, sends the famines and the sad cares, and the rains and the fruitful seasons, and to men their testing-time of darkness. But behold, the sweet-eyed light of the sun shines brightly forth. So speak the writers of the Sibylline Oracles, those strange Jewish missionary books, in which a heathen prophetess surveys the whole early history of mankind, through the Gaulish invasion of Asia Minor in 280 B.C., to the rise of Rome, when (as the Oracle puts it sadly) the world will be under the dominion of a woman. Eras of destruction alternate with eras of happiness. Through all history, God is seen. He preceded history, He revealed Himself in history, and He finally judges history.

I do not think that it is too much to say that Apocalypse supplied a 'Semitic philosophy of history'. History is not a disconnected series of independent episodes. 'Apocalypse and not Prophecy', as Dr. Charles says, 'was the first to grasp the great idea that all history, alike human, cosmological, and spiritual, is a unity.' Enoch, Professor Burkitt describes as 'an attempt to see the world steadily and to see it whole, to unify the physical world, the moral world, and the political world'. This, I may add, is true also of Daniel, the first and greatest of the Apocalypses. He sees the great world empires in organic connexion. The Psalter, like Isaiah, sees this also. In these, Israel is the Lord's instrument for bringing about the world-

wide extension of the Divine Kingdom. The difference is that the Apocalypses take a wider sweep of history, because they are later, and their authors have a fuller experience of the world and know more of the world's past. At all events, they do present a philosophy of history into which calamitous upheavals like the late war fit. Hope is fertilized by disaster, for the disaster is the sowing to hope. If thou seest the kingdoms in conflict with each other, says a Midrash, watch for the feet of the Messiah. Here the voice of Apocalyptic speaks; as it often speaks of the world's woe as a sign of the world's redemption. A purpose underlies it all, and an unerring and final judgement will be passed on it all. The prophets saw part of this, but they saw it in terms narrowed more or less to the confines of Judea. Anyhow, nowhere (whether in sacred or secular literature) before Daniel is it seen so clearly. In his vision he is by the seashore, and diverse beasts emerge from the water. I specially commend Driver's commentary. First the lion, noblest of beasts, with wings of the griffon-vulture, most majestic of birds. And the beast has a man's stature and a man's heart—indomitably strong and soaring, and intelligent withal. This symbolizes Babylonia. Then, behold, another beast, a bear—voracious, mostly a vegetarian in its diet, but now, under stress of hunger, bearing three ribs between its teeth, and to it was said, Arise, devour much flesh. This symbolizes Media, the destroyer of Babylon. Next rises up the leopard, fierce and agile ever, but fiercer still in its four-headed guise, more agile still when winged with four-fold pennons, ready to pounce and tear, a fit emblem for Persia. Lastly comes the fourth beast, ten-horned, dreadful and terrible,

and strong exceedingly; it has great iron teeth and devours and breaks and tramples, a nameless beast, altogether too awesome and cruel to be identified with any single animal—a symbol of the empire of Alexander the Great. What follows is most significant. The Assize in Heaven opens. The Ancient of Days, white-haired and dressed in flowing white, sits on a fiery judgement-seat, enthroned over wheels of fire amid a glowing stream, and myriads of angelic assessors sit near, and the judgement is set and the books opened. The beasts are arraigned, the fourth is sentenced to death, the others to loss of dominion—they survive ' until a season and a time '. Then arrives the finale. Coming with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man arrives. On him is to be bestowed everlasting kingdom over all peoples, nations, and languages, a kingdom which shall never pass away. This is the kingdom of heaven on earth, ruled over by the saints, i.e. by Israel idealized, a kingdom which absorbs unto itself the whole of human kind.

Thus in Daniel we already find an attempt to co-ordinate history and relate it to the final purpose. Neither Daniel nor the later Apocalypses, nor indeed any other ancient passage, sacred or profane, co-ordinates history as does the writer of one particular prophecy, the concluding verses of Isaiah xix. West and East, Assyria and Egypt, are to be one with Israel in God's affection. ' In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that the Lord of hosts hath blessed them, saying: Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.' I read in these verses the true vision, the noblest philosophy

of history. All our philosophies lean toward chauvinism. Each nation pretends to be a member of the league, yet aspires to hegemony over it. Most of the ancient Prophets and Apocalyptists, most of the later teachers of Synagogue and Church, had no other philosophy. But Isaiah here pictures not the overthrow of nation by nation, and the final supremacy of one, but their co-ordination in God's purpose. Equal they, by virtue of His love for all. Egypt God's people, Assyria the work of His hands, Israel His inheritance—that is the true philosophy of history, or perhaps just a little farther must we go—when there shall be no Egypt, nor Assyria, nor Israel—but all men one in God, in the ideal consummation of destiny. But the world is not yet ready for a philosophy of history so revolutionary. There is work and place yet for the nationalities and the creeds, but these might at least make a bigger effort than they have so far done to see themselves in perspective, to avoid ruining the proportions of the picture by the enlargement each of itself in the foreground. But artists are always egotistical, and their pictures of the Last Judgement must still be filled with lurid sketches of doom for every one but themselves.

My metaphor from art leads me to my last point. You will observe that I have not even considered the claim made by Dr. Charles on behalf of Apocalyptic Judaism that it represents the 'higher theology' of the Synagogue. This bizarre claim is examined and rejected by Mr. C. G. Montefiore in a brilliant essay contributed to the *Quest* for October 1915. But this rejection does not mean that Dr. Charles is wrong in finding splendid thoughts in this literature. 'Love ye one another from the heart, and if a man sin against thee, speak

peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he repent and confess, forgive him. . . . And if he be shameless and persist in his wrongdoing, forgive him from the heart and leave to God the avenging.' This is fine doctrine. So, too, is this: 'Anger is blindness, and does not suffer one to see the face of any man with truth.' Or again, 'If a man prospereth more than thou, do not be vexed, but pray for him that he may have perfect prosperity.' Dr. Charles rightly praises these and similar thoughts, and detects in them the source of some famous Gospel passages. Where he is wrong is that he claims that such ideas were exclusive to the Apocalypses and absent from Rabbinic Judaism. On the contrary, the value of these Apocalyptic passages is their evidence of the continuity of Jewish thought. The higher theology of Judaism must be sought, after the Bible, in the Apocalypses, in the Rabbinic books and in the Synagogue Liturgy. In passing, let me remark that Apocalypses (particularly Daniel and Jubilees) did influence the liturgy more than is commonly recognized. But I must avoid this digression. Similarly with the eschatological problem in general. How far visions of heaven and hell permeated Judaism, how far these pictures were created and coloured by Apocalyptic imagery, cannot now occupy us. However created or coloured, they are now obsolete, and without present value. I have preferred to note the permanent value of Apocalypse in its determined hopes of the end as a contribution to the philosophy of history. But I cannot conclude without a word or two as to the permanent value of Apocalyptic on art.

The value is not unmixed. Some of the imagery of the apocalypses is weird and grotesque enough. You try in

vain to visualize them—a woman booted in sun and moon and crowned with twelve stars—or four-faced, four-winged, calf-footed, man-handed creatures of the chariot —or giants with flaming faces and burning eyes, with lips belching flame, clothed in purple, golden-pinioned, snow-fingered—or Eve, standing up to her neck in water surrounded by every manner of swimming thing—and all the other properties of a pantomime nightmare. So, too, with Enoch's ice-fire edifices, and mystic trees, and the incongruous and unrealizable monsters generally which crowd the Apocalyptic canvas. The best feature is that they are so unrealizable. Albrecht Dürer's designs in illustration of the Book of Revelation may, as Sidney Colvin holds, show ' the rugged strength and vehemence of German Gothic . . . fused in vital combination with classical severity '. But the fusion cannot be said to escape grotesqueness, and the fault is not the artist's but the poet's. These poets are under no restraint, but gather grist in every mill. The opening lines of Horace's *Ars Poetica* are a striking criticism of this Apocalyptic exuberance. Annotators of Horace doubt whether he had any real models in his mind when he laughed at pictures joining a fair woman's face to a horse's neck, a fish's tail, feathers from various birds, limbs from manifold beasts—

> Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
> Iungere si velit, et varias induere plumas,
> Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
> Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne,
> Spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici ?

Yet it may be suggested that Horace had somehow read or seen depicted one or other of the Apocalyptic medleys of disordered fancy. There are limits, as Horace concludes, even to poetic or artistic licence.

Nevertheless, the pictorial influence of the Apocalypses is not to be decried. The conception of powers and ideas and polities as monstrous animals succeeds in individualizing the characters of powers and ideas and polities, in making them impressive, even if not realizable visually. Pictorial art perhaps should have kept its hand off. Poetry can be granted entrance where pictorial art should fear to tread. This is also true of the Stage. In England there is a censorship of plays, not of books. The very theme which is freely printed within the boards of a volume is occasionally banned from the boards of the theatre. This is not so unreasonable as may at first sight appear. The readers of books, in the first instance, are a more select class than are the witnessers of plays. Eye is more mischievously inclined when gazing than when reading, but chiefly, a scene described in words may be less suggestive and less offensive than the same scene enacted. Anyhow, this seems a fair criticism of the Apocalypses. The imagery becomes more grotesque in pictorial illustration than in verbal description. Yet William Blake's drawings of the four Horses of the Apocalypse—the white horse (Pestilence), the red horse (War), the black horse (Famine), and the pale horse (Death)—are fascinating enough in their dreamy mysticism, and not over-repulsive in their realistic horror. So, too, there is much to admire in Rembrandt's etching, made for his friend and neighbour Menasseh ben Israel, of the Colossal image, with golden head, silver breast, thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of clay, broken in pieces by a stone cut out without hands. The four horses go back to Zechariah, the feet of clay to Daniel. Has not this imagery survived? There is much else that might be cited of permanent value to literature and art. Feet of

clay and the four horses—could we let them go without loss ?

Be that as it may, the Jewish Apocalypses are deserving of closer study than they have received at the hands of Jews. Extremists are not to be approved, Christian extremists who overrate these books as all-worthy, Jewish extremists who dismiss them as all-worthless. The truth lies between. In Professor Burkitt's phrase, they show us Judaism ' thinking imperially '. Let not this adverb disturb a good Republican audience, if it does disturb it, for I have seen as much imperialism in democracies as in aristocracies. The word imperial in this context was used in British politics as a counter-blast to what used to be called little Englandism, an out-look confined to and bounded by the British isle. What shall he know of England who only England knows ? What shall he know of Israel who only Israel knows ? Apocalypse gave Israel a place in the great wide world, perceived Israel's history and destiny, not in isolation but in relation to the destiny of men. And Apocalypse was a valuable aid to the pilgrim's progress through carnage to contentment. Armageddon received its setting in the picture. Prophecy taught, but Apocalypse taught more impressively, that in things as ordered, the passage to peace is often through a battle-field, through sorrow to joy, through darkness to light, through Chaos to Cosmos. Nowhere else is man's destiny more fearlessly faced, more honestly portrayed ; nowhere else is man's control of destiny more hopefully enunciated. I have quoted so little, that I must cite at least one passage from Baruch, written when Judea's horizon was cloud-hidden. Yet through the cloud darts the sudden flash. ' Though Adam first sinned and brought untimely

death upon all, yet of those who were born from him each one has prepared for his own soul torment to come, and again each one of them has chosen for himself glories to come. Adam is therefore not the cause, save only of his own soul, *but each one of us has been the Adam of his own soul.*' A great phrase and a great idea—coined and circulated when the Temple lay in ruins. It is a phrase which makes for the belief that the world is sometimes master of its fate, that Destiny is in part what the world makes it. This phrase of itself would give Apocalypse permanent value.

But the root of the matter is not with these Apocalyptic books taken by themselves. For it is not to Apocalypse that we can turn for competent guidance in the day's work; when it refers to righteousness it does so in unattractive and vague terms. All the Apocalyptic ends come and go, and man has no other course open to him than to go on living as best he can. If he make the best of the world as it is, the best of all worlds may be possible of attainment. It all depends, said a Rabbi, on man's amendment of himself that the world destiny shall mend, and the Messianic age dawn. Nay, retorts another Rabbi, the Messianic age does not depend on man's moral endeavour. The implication of the retort is that if God had to wait for man's initiative in betterment, earth must roll on for ever on its crooked way. If the Lord waits for man to begin, divinely infinite must be His patience.

And yet, human nature is not hopelessly inert. The Apocalypses believe in the heroic. We may be heroes all, if only heroes of the commonplace. In the midst of the disastrous war with Rome, Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai said: ' If thou holdest a sapling in thine hand, and some one cries lo ! the Messiah has come, plant thy sapling and

then go to meet him.' Do not interrupt the work because of Messianic dreams: dream and dream on, but fix the sapling in good red earth. Prophecy and Apocalyptic join hands here—the now and the to-come, the work and its reward. Apocalypse stresses the Messiah, the Rabbi the work; but each requires and desires both; the actual and the ideal, the present age and the New Age. Do you recall how Voltaire ends his *Candide*, the most pessimistic pamphlet ever penned? *Candide* is a destructive arraignment of Leibnitz's ridiculous claim that, here and now, all things are for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Neither Apocalyptist nor Rabbi, except a rare man of Gimso, would have seriously accepted this facile optimism, any more than the French satirist accepted it. But the Apocalyptist taught us how to regard righteousness as a means to the End, and the Rabbi advised us, while looking for the Messiah, to plant our saplings. And what of Voltaire? 'That is well,' said Candide; 'let us cultivate our garden.' Apocalypse and Rabbinism and Criticism are thus at one. And for a good reason. Our garden lies here, and cultivate it we must or starve.

III

THE PERMANENT VALUE OF PHILO

It is not altogether unfair to liken certain of the mines and wells of genius to veins of gold or pockets of oil. Veins and pockets are apt to be exhausted in the process of extracting the solid and liquid treasure, and nothing may remain except the ruins of the old workings. Even so, the metaphor is faulty. Near Sacramento I was shown crop-bearing fields, the soil of which has been fertilized by the obsolete labours of the forty-niners. There is no more gold, but a legacy is left of corn, more golden. With genius, the parallel of vein or pocket exhaustion is even less exact. Sometimes accomplishment survives, sometimes personality, though not invariably both.

Socrates, Goethe, Heine—the lives of such still interest, while their work also endures. But of Shakespeare the man we know little, and that little is hardly worth knowing. He survives as poet, hardly as man, except in so far as the man is revealed in the work. With Philo the reverse is the case. His work is less than himself. Much of what he wrote has grown foreign to us, but to his personal ideals we are still akin. He thus has a permanent value for Jews if not for Judaism. For Judaism also, since if time permitted I think I could demonstrate that Philo was potent in suggesting some of the leading doctrines of Rabbinism. Philo sails in the main stream of Hebraism, he lies stranded in no backwater.

Philo, none the less, is a pathetic figure. He was glorious in his day, proud of Judaism and devoted to Jews ; greatly significant to his religion and community at a crucial turning-point—the very beginning of the Christian era. And then, while his importance grew for others, he was for many centuries outcast, or at least forgotten by his own. But to his own he has now come back. And he would have enjoyed his new fame, for he wished for fame with his brethren. Never was he more in the Jewish vogue than at the present time. He is being turned to for charming and original thoughts, for illustrations of Midrash ; turned to by the poet for his allegories and by the controversial theologian for his anticipations of Christian ideas. Not only Renan sees in Philo ' the elder brother of Jesus ', the source of, or the parallel to, parts of the New Testament. And so the pathos of Philo is being relieved. The Synagogue has taken him to its arms again, refusing to permit the Church to monopolize him. No Jew is now so ingrate or so ignorant as to refuse to Philo the homage of attention, if not of admiration.

The new Jewish interest in Philo is due, I think, to four causes. In the first place, he stands historically in the line of literary evolution. When, under the influence of the Italian renaissance, Azariah de Rossi in 1573 created the modern Jewish historical criticism, he did so by the rediscovery of the Judeo-Greek books, which had seemed so remote from the main current of Jewish scholarship. That is a remarkable fact. But there is more than an historical ground for the Philonean revival. There is a theological reason. Jews no longer regard Christianity in isolation ; they can, under the liberal thought of our time, take pride in the Jewish elements

which went to the upbuilding of the Church. But besides the historical and theological causes for the revival of interest in Philo, there is a purely aesthetic cause. It is felt by many that in the Jewish literature composed in Greek there is a something intrinsically beautiful. Jewish genius was never less one-sided, never more versatile, than when Judea produced a Hillel and a Jesus, while Alexandria produced an Ezekielos and a Philo. There was Pharisaism and its critic on the one side, Hellenism and its syncretists on the other. This Judeo-Greek literature was a brilliant second to the Judeo-Hebrew literature. The Greek expression of Jewish thought was rich and comprehensive. It extended from apologetics—i. e. Greek vindications of the superiority of Judaism over paganism—through romance, to an imitation of a drama of Euripides. Historians arose not unworthy of a place beside Polybius ; a Greek translation of the Pentateuch was the earliest of the world's great versions and the model for them all ; religious philosophers like the author of the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo contributed, in a style full of attractiveness, to the mouldings of the religion and philosophy of the West. All these books have a peculiar literary charm. They are not of the quality of the Hebrew books, but they have their own quality : the Hebrew force is stronger, the Hellenic form fairer.

Yet even this is not quite all. To the historical and theological importance of these Greek books and to their literary charm we must add a much more significant factor, a factor of life. Looking close into Philo, into his aims more than into his achievements, we find that he was faced by the eternal problem of Jewish life—how to share the world's wide interests and its truest

culture, and yet, with all this, how to retain an unconquerable devotion to Jewish Ideals. To live at once in the world and outside it, to harmonize an intense Jewish life with a reasonable appreciation of other culture—is not this our eternal problem ?

If you would be Jews and Americans, true Americans and true Jews, aspiring to genuineness in both aspects of the relationship, Philo gives you a hint towards success. To the sham, to the insincere, Philo is of no help : such had better pass him by. I have been told of a rabbi who, standing in his pulpit, drew out of one pocket the stars-and-stripes, and out of the other a fringed synagogue tallith, and flapped them wildly before his congregation as a token, I suppose, of what he imagined was a patriotic syncretism. Again, I saw (as many of you saw) Jewish soldiers in the American army wearing a badge combining the shield of David with the stars-and-stripes. All this is food for laughter to the philosopher, and Philo would have laughed at it as heartily as you and I laugh at it.

If you merely wish to flap the American flag without allegiance to the truth of Americanism, if you merely wish to flaunt the Jewish tallith without understanding the truth of Judaism—if, in other words, your ambition is to superimpose one chauvinism on another, one superficiality on another—then Philo has no message for you. So, too, if, while seriously idealistic, you wish to suppress one ideal in favour of the other, Philo has no message for you. Philo's message is one of harmonizing ideal with ideal, it is neither a message of superficiality nor of suppression, it is a message of reality and enrichment. And what I say of American Jews is true of English and of all other Jews. Philo was a Hebrew and a Hellene,

a genuine Hebrew and a genuine Hellene. Need I go farther in vindication of his permanent value for us all? His problem was our problem. Can his solution of his problem suggest to us a solution of our problem?

Philo was big-souled, his vision wide, his outlook free from fanaticism. He was born between 20 and 10 B.C., and was thus in middle age when Jesus was at the height of his younger activity in Galilee. 'What a pity', exclaims Renan, 'that the chances of life did not conduct Philo to Galilee!' A meeting between Philo and Jesus would no doubt have meant much for the world. More piquant is the suggestion as to the possible results of a meeting between Philo and Paul, for Philo was a contemporary of Paul as well as of Jesus. Philo could have shown Paul that the law, far from being 'the strength of sin', might be a prop of virtue. But though these meetings never took place, Philo did well enough in Alexandria. He was more at home there, in the centre of a life at once intellectual and luxurious, blazing with its busy and gorgeous bazaars, adorned by its poetry and its philosophy. '*Our* Alexandria', Philo terms it. He shared the Jewish Sibyl's love for this magnificent city of the Nile, its charming form enshrining an adorable soul. He would have sung with her:

> There shall be throned, a bride of Egypt then,
> Garlanded worthy of her noble lord,
> Fair Alexandria, Alexander's Queen,
> Famed nourisher of cities shining bright.
> Peace shall she shed, and with her fertile hand
> Send fruits abroad, and flowers beyond compare.

Can this Jewish panegyric of Alexandria be matched by a Jewish panegyric of any city but Jerusalem? Yes, it can. The cities of Andalusia in the Middle Ages

won a similar affection and admiration. Thus did Harizi sing in Hebrew of Tolaitula or Toledo :

> They said 'twas rapture to the eyes
> Like sunshine in the noon-day skies :
> Its dust smelt sweet as sweetest myrrh,
> Its breeze the spirit's life could stir ;
> Dear, in its robe of radiant glow,
> To God on high, to men below.
> I found that words could ne'er express
> The half of all her loveliness.

Those musical names—Alexandria, Andalusia ! Their memories are a melody. What though in one as in the other anti-Semitism raised its horrid head. Thrown to the elephants in Alexandria, burnt at the stake in Andalusia ! Yet withal the Jew remained true to type. Life ran broad and deep, and the swimmer was valiant, though the stream was disturbed by man-made storm. A fine moral for us, and Philo first taught it. For Jerusalem was in his heart, while he lived in and loved Alexandria. He was on with the new love without being off with the old. His harp was not one-stringed. Nor should our harp be used for freakish Paganini tricks.

Now this fact about Philo would remain permanently valid even if it were true that Alexandrian Judaism as a whole failed to maintain itself, but lapsed into heathenism or became absorbed into Christianity. For my own part, I do not believe that this really happened. Neither lapse nor absorption would account for more than a minority. Very many of the Hellenized Jews were actually annihilated in the terrible outbreaks which occurred, according to Dion Cassius, in the first half of the second century B.C. Again, many Alexandrian Jews must have migrated from Egypt to Asia Minor,

and formed a nucleus of the Greek-speaking communities which flourished in the Byzantine empire up to and beyond Justinian, and only ceased to use Greek when Islam replaced Greek, as it did Aramaic, by Arabic. Among the Moroccan Arabic-speaking Jews who settled with Tarik in Spain must have been many descendants of emigrants from Alexandria. If there were secessions in Alexandria, it is possible that Judean neglect of the diaspora was in part to blame.

The Palestinian Jews are recorded to have invited the Alexandrians to join in the celebration of the Maccabean victories over Hellenism. We could have wished for more indications of a similar desire to retain for the central Judaism the allegiance of the Greek periphery. There are some such indications, and there would probably be more, but for the terrible convulsions in the whole Jewish world, caused by the overthrow of Bar Cochba. The isolation, however, of Greek from Palestinian Judaism is by no means so complete as is usually assumed. Take, for instance, the Greek translations of the Bible. Why was Aquila's Greek version made in the age of Akiba? Because the connexions between Greek-speaking and Aramaic-speaking Jews was so close that the Rabbinic Jews felt bound to give to the Hellenistic Jews a new version embodying Rabbinic methods. There was equally an influence of Greek Judaism on Rabbinism, a penetrating and permeating influence. Philo deeply affected the Palestinian Midrash. There was no isolation. Scholars are at present only on the outskirts of the inquiry. I would earnestly exhort, with that accomplished Philonean scholar, Leopold Cohn, 'those who are well versed in Jewish literature to occupy themselves more with Philo than has hitherto

been done. They will find in him a profitable field of labour.' For myself, my own investigations reveal again and again points of close contact between Philonean and Rabbinic thought.

It may be asked: Philo had predecessors, but why no followers? May not the answer be that in him the allegorical method reached saturation point? Dante had no disciples, and for the same reason. The methods of Philo and Dante culminated in those masters. Their influence remained potent, but not their genre. And the disciple puzzle cuts two ways with Philo. If the Alexandrians went over *en masse* from Synagogue to Church, why do we not meet, among the eminent theologians of the Church, leaders of Jewish birth? Surely among the Alexandrian Jews were men of light worthy of leadership. All these questions have never been fully faced. Nor has the problem of lost literature. If the Jews forgot Philo, why did the Christians forget Enoch, to the extent that large parts of that very influential literature failed of preservation in Greek and only survived in Slavonic and other extra-Greek tongues? Such losses and obligations are hard to explain. They are not necessarily due to deliberate rejection.

It has sometimes been argued, as though it was a fault instead of a merit, that the doctrines of Philo impregnated Christianity. Such Jewish influence on other religions has often been exercised by teachers without any suspicion of the Jewishness of those teachers. Ibn Gabirol affected the Church mystically, as much as, if not more than, he did the Synagogue. Maimonides had as much influence on Christian scholasticism as on Jewish thought. Nay, his influence was greater on Church than on Synagogue. Jewish thought to-day is

not Aristotelian, Catholic thought is, and without Maimonides Thomas Aquinas could not have written his Summa. Yet neither Gabirol nor Maimonides ceased to be Jewish : to the one we owe sublime Synagogue hymns, to the other the first systematic Code of traditional Law. It was charged by contemporary unassimilated Spanish Jewish critics, against the Jewish Philosophers, that to them was due the rise of the strange phenomenon of Marranism. These assimilative philosophers, it was alleged, undermined Jewish power of resistance to the Inquisition and its intolerant forerunners, and there thus was produced a large group of men who, beginning as sham-Christians to save their skins, became real Christians to the loss of their Jewish souls. Similar allegations were made regarding Moses Mendelssohn. His attempt to reconcile modern culture with ancient Judaism, it was said, so weakened the latter that the rot was not stayed until a policy of active non-assimilation was proclaimed by Zionism. But the proclaimers of this policy, like Nachman Krochmal and Ahad Haam, must themselves be classed with the assimilationists. These advocates of a Jewish culture derive their inspiration partly from Judaism and partly from Hegelianism—Krochmal admittedly so, Ahad Haam none the less certainly so because it is not admitted. All this is a matter for pride, not for regret. For Judaism is only vital in any age when it formulates itself in the terminology of the age.

Nor must we for a moment conceive of Philo as an assimilationist. He was quite a good ' Zionist ', in that best of senses in which all Jews can and must accept ' Zionism '. Philo's writings glow with affection for the Holy City, the Vision of Peace, as he interpreted it.

Remember, the Temple still stood, and Philo directed to the Temple some of his most enthusiastic idealism. Nor did his love end with words. He was an eager participator in the due financial support of the Temple ritual and priesthood. I am not sure that Philo has not given us all, Zionists and non-Zionists alike, the true lead in our modern struggle to do what Philo attempted, to harmonize our international Judaism with our national citizenships. In a famous passage, which cannot be too often quoted, Philo thus expresses himself on the relation between membership of a particular state and allegiance to the common bond between the Jewish members of all states: 'No country', writes Philo, 'can contain the whole Jewish people on account of its populousness; for which reason they frequent all the most prosperous and fertile countries of Europe and Asia, whether islands or continents, looking indeed upon the Holy City as their *mother city*, in which is erected the sacred Temple of the Most High God—but accounting those regions which have been occupied by their father and grandfathers . . . in which they have been brought up, as their *father land*.' Is not this a truly illuminating thought? The Jew is to regard himself as the child of two parents, spiritually as well as physically. His father is his country; from it he derives his civic nourishment, to it his virile energies belong; he lives by it and lives for it. But in his heart there is room for mother love too. Zion is this mother, to her his affection goes out as to a source of his spiritual being. There is here no dual nationality, no divided allegiance. Is a child divided in heart because he love mother as well as father? Philo, I repeat, gives us the true lead. In our age even more than in Philo's the masses of the

Jews can and must remain outside Palestine. ' Father land ', ' mother city '—England, Jerusalem—fine phrases, but more than phrases. They spell realities.

Perhaps, however, we best realize Philo on his Jewish side when we watch him giving a practical turn to his love for his religion and people. In the middle of the first century of our current era Philo was growing old. In Alexandria Roman rule had been more than mild, it had been beneficent. Jews were not debarred from worshipping freely in their synagogues, remitting their temple-dues to Jerusalem, and, as Mr. Hart expresses it, ' devoting themselves in their several ways to the pursuit of happiness '. But suddenly came a change. Flaccus, the Roman governor, connived at an outbreak of mob anti-Semitism, and, in the teeth of Jewish resentment, set up images of the deified emperor, Gaius Caligula, in the synagogues. An embassy was sent to Rome, and Philo went with it. He did not seclude himself in his library, but came out into the open as a champion of Judaism. It was no mere question of privilege for the Alexandrian community that was at stake. In face of the danger to monotheism, Philo hesitated not to brave the winter voyage, which some of us have reason to know may be sufficiently uncomfortable even in modern vessels. In Philo's day the voyage was more than uncomfortable; it was perilous. ' Rather than erect the created and perishable nature of man into the uncreated and imperishable nature of God ', says Philo, ' the Jews embrace a voluntary death as an entrance to immortality.' No weakling spoke these words. Alexandrian Judaism had the heroic touch which moved Maccabaeus and all subsequent Jewish martyrs to prefer death to acquiescence in disloyalty to the One God.

Arrived in Rome, the embassy was promised a hearing. But the court suddenly transferred itself to Puteoli. After the Emperor trailed Philo and his fellow ambassadors, waiting for an audience. Here they met a flushed and panting envoy from Palestine, telling them that the threat had penetrated to the heart of Jewry. 'Our temple is gone,' cried this messenger of woe, amid his gasps and his tears, 'the Emperor has ordered a colossal statue of himself, inscribed with the name of Zeus, to be set up within the Sanctuary.' Aghast, the deputies stood stock-still. They were the more disturbed when they discovered that Caligula 'not only affirmed but actually believed in his own divinity'. At last, however, the embassy was received by his imperial majesty, who was engaged in an inspection of the gardens of Maecenas and Lamias. 'You are atheists,' he exclaimed, 'atheists, who deny my divinity, which every one else admits.' But the envoys protested that they had thrice offered sacrifices in his honour; on his accession, on his recovery from sickness, on his victory over the Germans. 'That 's well enough,' retorted Caligula, 'but you did not sacrifice to *me*.' He turned away to inspect the farm-buildings. The scene is not without its humour. Mr. J. H. A. Hart gives a spirited summary, on which I draw freely. Upstairs and downstairs the Emperor rushed, finding fault and sketching costly alterations. In his wake trudged the envoys. Then he burst on them the question: 'Why don't you eat pork?' The courtiers, in defiance of etiquette, roared with laughter, some because they really were amused, others because they thought it desirable to manifest appreciation of the imperial wit. Philo respectfully answered: 'Different peoples have different laws; there are some things

our critics may not use.' Some one interpolated: 'Yes, most men refuse to have common lamb served up to them.' The imperial intelligence saw the point. 'That 's reasonable enough,' said the Emperor, 'lamb is not good eating.' Then he went on to ask the Jews for information as to their laws. Philo began, but off leapt the Emperor at a great pace into a near-by building, and gave orders for the glazing of the windows. 'Well, what do you say?' he asked again, but before Philo had time to resume his exposition, the Emperor was off again, running into another house to superintend the hanging of some old pictures. Philo was in despair. But the Emperor grew more considerate. In a milder mood he said: 'It seems to me that these men are unfortunate rather than wicked; their unbelief in my divine nature is mere stupidity.' And so, telling them that they were fools rather than rogues, he bade Philo and the rest depart.

Let me merely add the satisfactory note that the embassy gained its point. Philo's unpleasant experience was not fruitless, for Caligula withdrew his offensive intrusion into the sanctity of Temple and Synagogue. In the case of Jerusalem, a word is due in praise of Petronius. This Roman legate understood the Jews, and he had refused, from the first, at the risk of his life, to comply with Caligula's order. Had all Roman authorities in Palestine shown the same delicacy to Jewish susceptibilities, the catastrophe under Titus might have been avoided. The Jews were no doubt a great nuisance to the local Roman Governors, but though exasperating enough, they were not unmanageable under tactful and conciliatory treatment. With regard to the Alexandrian situation, Philo's victory was

complete. When Caligula died, his successor Claudius published this rescript : ' Caligula, from his great madness and want of understanding, oppressed the Jewish people, because they would not transgress their national religion, and call him a god ; I decree that the Jewish people be not deprived of their rights . . . and that they may continue in their religion.' Thus civic equality and religious freedom were alike confirmed by the Roman autocrat. Rome was guilty of many crimes, but many virtues must be placed to her credit.

You will share my admiration of Philo when I remind you that this champion of the Jewish cause had himself no personal fears from Alexandrian mobs. He was a real aristocrat, with the highest social connexions. Josephus informs us of the prominent position of Philo's brother, Alexander Lysimachus ; he filled a conspicuous role in Rome, as well as in Alexandria. He was son-in-law of King Agrippa, and was described as ' my old friend ' by the Emperor Claudius. Alexander held the post of Alabarch, the leading civic office in the Alexandrian Jewish community. ' So favoured,' as Mr. Hart comments, ' it is possible that Alexander earned his second name Lysimachus (peace-maker) by putting an end to the civil war between Jews and gentiles in Alexandria when Claudius came to the throne. But for all his greatness '—and this is so important—' Alexander Lysimachus remained true to his native religion ; and he covered the nine gates of the Temple with silver and gold.'

We have now reviewed the Jewish half of Philo, what of his Greek half ? Philo himself would have repudiated any such division. He would have disputed the common characterization of him, that he was half Jew, half

Greek. He would have claimed to be whole Jew and whole Greek. Possibly his claim would have needed some qualification on both counts, but it would have been substantially true. Had he lived in our days in New York, he might have consented to call himself a hundred per cent. American, but he would have emphatically called himself also a hundred per cent. Jew. Without pushing this parallel too far, we may unhesitatingly say of Philo that he was spiritually as well as politically a man of undivided allegiance. This is the charm and the value of Philo. He did not collate, he unified. He did not serve two masters, Moses and Plato. To him they were one Master. For more than two centuries the Alexandrian Jews, from Aristobulus onwards, had claimed that Greek philosophy was of Hebrew origin. With Philo this claim expressed itself in two forms. Whatever he learned from the Greeks—from Plato, the later Pythagoreans, and the Stoics—he found again in the Pentateuch. On the other hand, Mosaism was to Philo a citizenship of the world; Moses was the teacher of all aspirants after spiritual truth. 'The details of (Biblical) ritual and biography were but a rich symbolism, veiling the story of the soul's progress from the sense-bound life of earth to the vision of perfect reality in God' (Kennedy). Fellowship with the fountain of all being was the goal of the great Hebrew legislator, who, besides aiming at the moral discipline of the Hebrew tribe, was concerned with the education of the whole human race. The Jewish religion and its personal adherents had a mission to humanity. Judaism, according to Philo, was a religion for all reasonable men. For in their aspirations towards goodness and truth all men are akin. 'Kinship', says Philo, 'is not measured by

blood alone, but by likeness of conduct and pursuit of the same ends.' He says this explicitly of Jews, but he implies it of the world.

Philo elsewhere expresses this same thought not only very beautifully, but also very inspiringly for us. Abraham's wanderings are the travels of a virtuous soul in quest of God—the spiritual progress of all mankind. Such allegorization is assuredly not obsolete. You need no telling that this fanciful allegorization was familiar to the Stoics, who did for Homer what Philo afterwards did for Moses. Stoic allegorization, as Zeller explains, was a bridge over the gulf between the older types of culture and the more modern. Men wished to retain the old formulas, but to reinterpret them. This is the most efficient method of progress, and Philo also used the method. The Law of God was as perfect to Philo as to the Psalmist or Pharisee. If he found in the Law matters that did not fit his thought, he allegorized the Law, just as the Stoics allegorized Homer. But while the Stoic was looking in Homer for the First Cause, Philo sought in the Bible for the Father. In other words, to adapt a useful remark of Lewes's, Philo replaced bankrupt Stoicism by solvent Judaism. He saw in the history of primeval man a type of the spiritual evolution of humanity. The Rabbis asserted that the Patriarchs observed parts of the Law before the Law. This was a Philonean thought. The Patriarchs not only practised virtue before there was any Law, but the Law itself was a law of their very nature.

We thus arrive at a most valuable principle for ourselves. The divine Law is not something mechanically imposed on us from without; it corresponds to an inner law of our being. Our reason is a true impres-

sion of the Divine Image. Hence, says Philo almost in so many words, the obligation to obey the Law rests not on the ground that the Law was imposed, but on the ground that it is realized as good and true. It perfectly expresses the Divine Intelligence, and the human intelligence perfectly responds to it. Lazarus in his Ethics of Judaism claims, without citing Philo, that this is also the principle of Rabbinism. The Law is not good because it is written, but written because it is good. Modern Judaism has to learn anew this accommodation; it has to find means for regarding Law as at once imposed from without and realized from within. Then there is a harmony established between intuition and authority, between the individual's personal experience and the accumulated demand of tradition.

It was one of Philo's greatest, most permanently valuable contributions to religion that he saw both sides of this issue. He saw God in nature, in the institutions of law, in all human aspiration. But he saw man there also. With the Lone God, man may be alone. The Law was the product of the Divine Reason, but conscience is a legislative reason within each of us. Kennedy claims that Philo contributed to the content of ancient ethics a new principle, Conscience, as 'the divine agent in the soul, so illuminating its actions that their real value cannot escape detection'. Law given, Conscience acquiescing; law the gold, conscience the test and the hall-mark. If Philo did no more than establish Conscience as an ethical standardization of law he deserves to survive.

You will clearly understand that I am making no attempt to expound Philo's philosophy within the limits of a brief address. I am asking your attention

to a few selected points on which he has a very clear message to us. Even his bizarre theory of the Logos, the Word, as the spirit of God, somehow creative, somehow standing between man and God—even this theory has an application for our Judaism. When in the Johannine theory the 'word became flesh', the Logos idea lost its validity. For Philo's Logos is no principle of divine incarnation in man. It moves from God and in us; it links God and man, it does not identify them. Now Judaism can never abandon the difference or lessen the distance between God and man; it can never abandon or lessen what we term the divine transcendence. To Philo God is as transcendent as to Isaiah; heaven is as far above earth for him as it is for Saadiah. But if Judaism needs the outside, transcendent, distant God, it needs also a sense of the inside, immanent, near God. The Rabbis set up the ideal of the Imitation of God as the goal of human endeavour. Philo is even richer in his view of this idea. But how can man imitate God? Philo uses his Logos to answer this question. It is not God Himself that man can imitate, but he can imitate the image of God as seen in His laws and His world; suggested in His creative activities, reflected in man's virtuous impulses. In other words, the Logos gives us not only the image to copy, but the means of copying it. God, the transcendental, enters into the human soul; there is no desert of God, says Philo, in a magnificent phrase. The divine Law, by means of the divine word and the divine inspiration, first creates and then is, as it were, reacted upon by the human conscience. It is to Philo as much as to the Rabbinic theology that Judaism owes its unique capacity to keep God far and bring Him near.

God is not man, yet is He the father; He is as distant as heaven from earth, yet near to all who call upon Him in truth. 'Communion, between God and man', says Drummond, 'is in Philo's view among the permanent possibilities of our race.' Philo took this over from the Psalms and the Prophets, and he transmitted it to his and all future ages. 'The business of man', says Philo, 'is to follow and to imitate God; . . . to abide in God is man's highest blessedness.'

And here again we catch from Philo a note most modern, most practical, most necessary. 'To abide in God'—to win through to visions of Him—this is the end. Philo's eloquence on this subject is wonderful. The vision of God is man's aspiration, man's noblest gift. To search for this vision, even if the search fail, is able of itself to create great joy. 'If in your quest for God you will find Him is uncertain, for to many persons he has not made Himself known, and their toil has found no consummation—yet the mere search for Him has given them a share in what is good.' He conceives, however, the possibility of success. 'What lovelier or more fitting garland could be woven for the victorious soul than the power, with clear vision, to gaze upon Him who is? Truly splendid is the prize held out to the wrestling soul—to be equipped with eyesight so as to perceive without dimness Him who is alone worthy of contemplation.' Then with what delicacy of touch Philo elsewhere describes the gradual unfolding of this Vision. 'The soul anticipates its expectation of God with an early joy. We may liken it to what happens with plants. For these, when they are to bear fruit, first bud and blossom and put forth shoots. Look at the vine, how wondrously Nature has decked it out with

slender twigs and tendrils, with suckers and leaves, which all but utter in living accent the joy of the tree over the fruit that is to come.' The joy of the tree over the fruit that is to come—this is the anticipatory glory in the soul over the vision not yet fully attained.

Now I ask you, can our Judaism afford to neglect such thought so expressed? Judaism as we usually know it is a fine thing, but it is often humdrum in expression and often lacks the appeal of grace and style. Philo's sustained eloquence makes this deficiency good. He adds the Greek touch to our Hebrew truth; he attaches formal Hellenic beauty to the forceful Rabbinic message. We need both the Rabbinic force and the Philonean form. Or rather Philo inherited the rapturous eloquence of Jeremiah and Amos—poets they, as well as prophets. He and they sing while they exhort. He and they burn while they reason; they fire the soul while they cleanse it. We want the fire. We must burn with our desire for God.

But I have wandered from my point, which was that with all his enthusiastic ardour for the vision of God as the ultimate goal, Philo takes a very practical view of the relation of this goal to the path which Jews must tread. Now let me show you this in three ways; very briefly, for my time is nearly spent. First, then, Philo holds the search for the mystic vision of the Supreme to be in the highest degree the service of God. But think not that this service of God is to be separated from the service of man. 'Human virtue must walk upon the earth, and yet must aim at heaven.' 'Some people,' says Philo again, 'attaching themselves to one portion of the Decalogue, seem to neglect the other. For, filled with the unmixed draught of religious yearn-

ing, they have bid farewell to other occupations, and have dedicated their whole life to the service of God. On the other hand, they who suppose that there is no good beyond well-doing towards man, care only for human intercourse, and by their social zeal share their possessions with their fellows and seek to alleviate distress to the utmost of their power. Now, both the exclusive lovers of man, and the exclusive lovers of God, we may rightly call half-perfect in virtue. The perfectly virtuous are those who excel in both.' Here, you will observe, Philo touches very acutely a most modern problem, the relation of social service to religion.

Then there is the problem of asceticism, on which Mr. Montefiore has written so well in his *Florilegium Philonis*. In Alexandrian society there were two types, both aristocratic: those who gave themselves up to luxurious living, and those who in disgust withdrew themselves from the world entirely. We can perfectly understand both attitudes, we have them with us. In Alexandria, as in our great cities, wealth and poverty rubbed shoulders. Near the busy bazaars, rich with products imported to tickle the palates and adorn the persons of the rich, were, as has been well said, the hovels where the poor passed their days in discomfort and famine. Some generous youths of the wealthy classes were driven to a cult of the bazaar, others to a cult of the hovel. But, said Philo, such excess on either side marks not the strong but the weak man. Shun not the world, but live well in it. If you see a man starving himself, neglecting his bath and unguents, and affecting and counterfeiting poverty, take pity on him and show him the true way of continence. Do not avoid the festive board, but behave like a gentleman

over your wine. As he forcibly puts it, ' Be drunk with sobriety.'

Thirdly, Philo raises a problem fundamental to us as to him. Explaining the ritual laws as symbols of ideas, does Philo counsel Jews to try to get at the ideas without symbols ? I confess that I am not myself in complete agreement with Philo here, for I think that we can do this very thing. But many liberals and all conservatives assent to his protest. Philo, the greatest Jewish symbolist of all time, thought that symbol and idea must be wed, not divorced. In no ancient Jewish writer is the case for ceremonialism more aptly put, and it is to him that we owe the most popular Jewish defence of ritual. ' There are some men ', writes Philo, ' who, looking upon written laws as symbols of things appreciable by the mind, have failed to attend to the observance of the laws as such. . . . Yet though the seventh day is a lesson to teach us the power which exists in the uncreated God, . . . it does not follow that we are on that account to light a fire, or till land, or carry burdens, or conduct lawsuits on that day. . . . Nor does it follow that, because a feast is a symbol of the joy of the soul and its gratitude towards God, that we are to repudiate the assemblies ordained at the periodic seasons of the year. . . . But it is right to think that this class of things resembles the body because it is the abode of the soul, so also must we take care of the laws which are enacted in plain terms, for while *these* are regarded, *those* other things of which they are the symbols will be the more clearly understood.'

Philo the Jew thus harmonized his Judaism with his Greek surroundings. And this is his permanent value to us. His was a Hebrew soul speaking with

a Greek tongue. We shall only save ourselves from a devastating conflict if, in our circumstances, we can endeavour to do what he did in his. Can we not have Jewish souls speaking with an English tongue? In all ages this has been the problem of Jewish life when that life has been free. Those among us who fail to see that this is our problem, or who fail to approach it as Philo did, are not serving the Jewish cause usefully. Under emancipation there can still be a Jewish life. The first generations of those who, in modern times, won emancipation proved this possibility up to the hilt. They could share the culture of their day while enriching that culture by their Jewish ideals. Are we to surrender the trial and the effort? They are false to Judaism who in our age would cast off Jewish ideals in the interest of a complete assimilation. They are false to Judaism who tell us that a Jewish life cannot be led in a non-Jewish environment. What we need to proclaim to both extremes is that Jewish life can be lived in *any* environment. We have to prove this possibility to ourselves, and also to a critical and sceptical world. If we doubt the possibility ourselves, how shall we convince the world? What Philo did in Alexandria, Samuel the Nagid in Andalusia, Moses Mendelssohn in Berlin, Moses Montefiore in Ramsgate, we can and must do in New York and London, and we must make New York and London realize that we can do it, and are doing it. Mendelssohn regarded citizenship and Judaism as two compatible burdens. The way of the Jew is hard. 'Bear both burdens', cried Mendelssohn. Are they burdens? Philo called them both liberties, not yokes; he calls both 'excellences', not fetters. 'Be known,' exclaimed Philo in another context, but

the exclamation is applicable to the present context; ' Be known by your excellence in things human in order that you may apply yourself to excellence in things divine.' Is this not privilege rather than burden? Philo thought so, and his value will be permanent to us if he can make us think so too. He has set us an imitable example.

IV

THE PERMANENT VALUE OF THE TALMUD

WHILE Evangelists and Church Fathers were occupied in founding and organizing a new religion, loyal devotees were busy with the safeguarding and vitalization of the old, the religion out of which, in part, the newer grew. Judaism retired from the missionary contest for the conversion of the world. As Maimonides conceived it, Christianity, and later on Islam, provided means for diverting the world from paganism, until, in God's good time, there should ensue conversion to the full truth.

But though Judaism, partly from necessity, partly from design, ceased to be missionary to others, it never ceased to be missionary to itself. The message of law, of prophecy, of wisdom remained intact when Temple and state had vanished. This message, it was felt, must be treasured by the careful study of it and its close application to life; the daily round must be sanctified by the higher calls of the spiritual moments; home and market-place as well as Synagogue and school must be interpenetrated with an Ideal, hypostatized as the living Law of God. The hallowing of life is the purpose of life—liberals as well as conservatives accept this principle. It is at once the principle of Talmudism and the principle of the Judaism of all ages, including the present.

It is not relevant to my purpose to enter into the origin and method of the series of tomes which are together called the Talmud. All that I need say is that

two great works, consisting of many parts, are known under the title Talmud, a word which denotes primarily ' teaching ' and secondarily ' learning '. These two works are the Palestinian and Babylonian recensions, both of which are, in form, commentaries on the Mishnah. Mishnah means ' repetition ', hence oral teaching by repeated recitation. The Mishnah was completed about A. D. 200, during the period in which the New Testament was developed into its present canon. The commentary on the Mishnah is called Gemara, i. e. completion. The Gemara represents the scholastic, religious, and secular activities of the Jewish people in general and of the Rabbis in particular, both in Palestine and in Mesopotamia, from the beginning of the third to the close of the sixth centuries A. D. The Talmud includes Mishnah and Gemara; and, with certain other Rabbinic books, and certain concrete acts of communal organization, and phases of popular culture, the Talmud was the expression of the Jewish genius in literature, religion, and life during the period which, roughly speaking, extended from Augustus to Justinian. The world passed out of the ancient to the medieval régime almost at the moment when the final touches were being given to a book which has outlived both ancient and medieval régimes, and is still the object of vituperation and veneration in these modern days of ours.

Now, what are the qualities that assure permanent value to a book? Some books have their vogue and are forgotten. Why do certain other books live on, in Milton's phrase, ' embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life ' ?

There seem two main reasons for a book's immortality: an historical reason and a literary reason. And

the two may be combined, when a book is historically important and also continues to appeal to good judges of literature or to the general body of readers.

A book may be the first of its kind; it may create a school of imitators, like Johnson's Dictionary. We use other dictionaries now, but Johnson's will never be forgotten. The pioneer is remembered by the later settler. Books like More's *Utopia* have a similar extrinsic importance added to their intrinsic charm; *Utopia* gave a name to all subsequent idealisms of the same class. And a book may be the forerunner of vast social movements, like Malthus's *Essay on Population*; it may be the starting-point of a new era in science, like Darwin's *Origin of Species*, or it may be associated with a tremendous conflict, such as waged around the abolition of slavery, like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Books of this type will always be read, long after they have ceased to possess living value. They did once affect live issues, and, having done so, live on because of those issues. Books may mould events, and the events may retaliate on the fate of the books.

The Talmud indisputably has its place among such books. What the Jew is and will be he owes in large measure to the Talmud, or rather to the spirit which produced it. So long as Jews and Judaism exist, the Talmud must retain this historical value, in that it moulded life and character. You may deny permanent value, you cannot deny permanent influence to the Talmud. Nor does this fact, great as this fact is, exhaust the historical importance of the Talmud. The world has been affected, as well as the Jews, among other ways in this: The Talmud has been the butt of bigotry. It is a real triumph for a book to be a battle-ground of the

victorious fight against intolerance. I do not think that we Jews sufficiently esteem the part which persecution has often forced us and our literature to play in this regard. We and our books have been thrust into the limelight. One instance must suffice. The humanistic revival which occurred at the beginning of the sixteenth century centred around the Talmud. The Talmud was assailed by the renegade, Pfefferkorn—whether he was in his youth a respectable butcher or a disreputable burglar is disputed by his friends and foes—and defended by Reuchlin, the cultured founder of Hebrew studies in the modern Universities. This position of the Talmud, alike as the whipping-boy of obscurantists and the darling of humanists, of itself assures to the Talmud a permanent place in the story of the Renaissance. The Jewish Cabala, a little earlier, performed a similar function owing to Pico della Mirandola's discovery in the Cabala of the same Platonism which overthrew scholasticism and ended the Middle Ages.

I am not retelling in detail the strange and romantic story of the attack on and defence of the Talmud, for it has often been told, at quite sufficient length by myself only a year ago in the final volume of the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. In 1550 the uncensored Talmud was honoured by being placed on the Index, where I believe it still remains. A good Catholic friend of mine laughingly told me that he turns to the Index of prohibited books for a choice of the best things to read. To an outsider, the censorship of the Talmud is a veritable comedy of errors. This censorship began in 1264, when the Pope, Clement IV, appointed a commission to expunge all passages considered derogatory to the Church. As a result of the new interest in the Talmud aroused by Reuchlin's champion-

ship of it, a complete edition was begun in 1520, despite the censorship. As Reuchlin maintained, if the Talmud contains distasteful matter, that is reason not for its destruction but for its critical study. 'Do not burn the Talmud,' he protested, 'but read it.' Other Churchmen thought otherwise, and in 1579–81 there was published in Basel a censored version, which formed the model for almost all subsequent editions. One would have imagined that the censored passages dealing with Christianity were the very passages most interesting to Christian theologians. But just these were omitted. A strange result followed. The Index said nothing against printing these censored passages together in a separate book. This was done. It reminds one of the expurgated edition of Juvenal, in which all the coarse passages are removed from the text and carefully collected in the appendix. The reader who wishes to satisfy a vitiated taste for the obscene is spared the trouble of searching out the lines for himself. The delicate-minded editor has sifted the garbage out for him and piled it in an accessible heap.

Anti-Semitism has not infrequently rendered good service to Jews and Judaism. 'Who is your best friend?' asks the Greek professor in *Major Barbara*. 'My worst enemy,' answers Andrew Undershaft, 'for he keeps me up to the mark.' Bernard Shaw scores a bull's-eye. The enemy anti-Semitism may prove a friend if it keep us up to the mark, if it impel us to self-betterment in disproof of misprisal. In the case of the Talmud this indirect evaluation is even stronger. The Talmud has gained by detraction, for while its abusive assailants have often been the worst men, its Christian defenders from Reuchlin to Strack have been of the best. An honourable fate, this, to be condemned

by the vile and eulogized by the noble. Moreover, anti-Semitism has had some share in keeping the Talmud alive. The foe has seen to it that we do not forget. Some years ago, I visited August Wuensche in Dresden. This stalwart devotee of Hebrew learning was working on the Talmud. We conversed about anti-Semitism, when he suddenly exclaimed: 'But, alas for this degenerate age, anti-Semitism is not what it was!' There was indeed at the moment a lull in German academic virulence. I felt and looked astonished at Wuensche's exclamation. 'Yes,' he said, 'I mean it.' He went to a cupboard and brought out a bulky manuscript; the German translation of a Rabbinic text. 'I cannot get it published,' he moaned, with half-comical despondency. 'When I began to translate Rabbinic texts, anti-Semitism was in fine fettle. My translations sold by thousands. The anti-Semites bought them to attack them, the Jews bought them to defend them. But *now* neither side reads me. Yes, bother it all, I say, anti-Semitism is not what it was.' A funny story, you will say, but a rather saddening one.

This elevation of the Talmud to conspicuousness in the fight for intellectual freedom gives it a permanent value. But this value is extrinsic, external, almost accidental. It is far more satisfactory when literature retains its position because of its intrinsic, essential excellence. Security for continued vogue of a book is strongest when successive generations enjoy it. Homer lives because we enjoy Homer. An obsolete treaty may engage the scientific publicist, but the narrative of the Covenant at Sinai enthralls the lover of literature. The ancient Code of Hammaurabi with its Laws on men and women interest the social historian, but the Song of

Songs finds an echo in the ever-new emotions of the great army of lovers.

Has the Talmud this right to survive? Is it destined to literary immortality? In my lecture on Philo I suggested that Jewish literature in Greek possesses a beauty of style lacking in the Jewish literature in Aramaic or new-Hebrew. The difference, however, is one of degree. Not even Philo's similar phrase excels the epigrammatic felicity of Hillel's negative Golden Rule: *de-alach sene le-habrach lo teebad*: 'The hateful to thee, do not to another.' Or, 'No man was blind at Sinai'—said in illustration of the Torah as illumination. Philo's praise of the Law is matched in grace by the Rabbinic praise, if I may draw on Midrash as well as on the Talmud. The Law is a fire by which man warms himself, as well as a light by which he sees. It is a 'Tree of Life', and thus provided the food and drink by which Moses was nourished for forty days. Like a flask of honey and cream, its sweet odour exudes fragrance. The Law is a crown to the head and a charm to the neck, but also a malagma—a soothing plaster to the heart, a kollurion, a salve to the eyes, an emollient for every wound, a cup of healing when absorbed. The Law rested on the bosom of God from Creation until Israel took her to his heart at Sinai. 'An only daughter was mine and I gave her unto you', says God to Israel of the Law. Angels bore each of the Ten Words to kiss every recipient as he took it. The Law, moreover, filled the same function as Philo's Logos. Those who tell the Jew that he has nothing to love with the passion which a Christian feels for Jesus, forget Israel's passion for the Law. The Torah brought man and God together after a long separation. The Divine Presence had retired from earth

when man sinned; it had been the plan of God to dwell in His new-made world, but man's disobedience frustrated it. But at the base of Sinai, Israel said, 'We will do and we will hear', putting obedience even before the reception of the Divine Will. Then once more the transcendental God came to earth. There were but two spans between the hand of God and the hand of Moses when the one gave and the other took the tablets—six spans long—on which were engraved the Ten Words.

Nor is it only in the mystical direction that we find such admirable thoughts on the Law. The hero of one of Lockhart's Spanish Ballads sings:

My ornaments are arms,
My pastime is in war;
My bed is cold, upon yon wold,
My lamp yon star—

Here you have virility and pathos, but the virility is vicious and the pathos purposeless. The Mishnah, too, knows of the pathos of a bed on the ground, but the endurer of the discomfort is engaged in another type of campaign. It is the warfare of the Torah—the struggle towards the ideal. 'A morsel of bread with salt shalt thou eat and water by measure drink; on the earth must thou sleep, and live a life of hardship, the while thou toilest in the Torah.' And as for our warrior's pride in weapons as an ornament, read this contrast: 'No man may go out on the Sabbath with sword, bow, shield, or spear, and if he has done so he shall bring a sin-offering. Rabbi Eleazar said: these are a man's ornaments (and he may carry them on the Sabbath). Nay, replied the Sages (these are a stigma for), it is said: 'And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks.' Is it not plain

that the Talmud breathes the spirit of eternal Judaism, that it carries on the genuine prophetic tradition even while engaged in nice legal arguments?

But I must resist the temptation to quote from Talmud and Midrash specimens of fine thought finely expressed. Volume after volume of extracts could be written—have been written—though there is ample room for more, consisting of literary felicities, influential parables, epigrammatic maxims, splendid visions, flights of fancy. The Talmud not only feeds the mind and spirit; it stirs the imagination. If it be not a work of art, it contains works of art. It owes nothing to its translators, who at the worst are inaccurate, and at the best unintelligible. Even the translators of pretty excerpts mar the beauty. They either suffer from defect of style, like Hershon, or from excess of style, like Herder. No one has yet done for the Rabbinic parables what King James's translators did for the Gospel parables. Yet even as the translations stand, the beauties refuse to be crushed out; they defeat any tendency to assess the Talmud on an exclusively intellectual basis.

What of its moral basis? The Talmud certainly held that morality is expressible in terms of law. Moderns are more inclined to autonomous standards. Liberals are not able easily to accommodate themselves to the Talmudic theory. And yet when we put the question concretely, we are not so sure. Can a community be made moral and spiritual by being made law-abiding? You note I put in spiritual, because the Talmud never dreamed of driving out the spirit in favour of the letter. But to revert to my question. If the answer is affirmative, Pharisaism is justified as a theory, whether or not it succeeded in practice. If the answer is in the negative,

Pharisaism is inherently false. If the answer is doubtful (as I fancy it is), then Pharisaism is still on trial, and will probably remain so. It is an experiment which never consummates. I am not sure that liberals ought not to try the experiment over again, using somewhat different ingredients and quite different apparatus.

The Talmud made other contributions besides its poetry and its legalism to the permanent values of Judaism. It is the lineal descendant of the religion of the Old Testament, and, like the Old Testament, is interpenetrated with the presence of God in all human life. And beyond human life. It gave us the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, suggested in the later Psalms, announced in Daniel, expounded in the Wisdom of Solomon, but firmly established as a dogma of Judaism by the Talmud. It gave us prayer for sacrifice, it transformed the Day of Atonement from a priestly ritual to a spiritual exercise, it developed the wonderful thought that Israel's sufferings may be afflictions of love, it abolished capital punishment, it adumbrated for us a theology in which was included the useful conception of the two yetsers, it raised the Imitation of God as the moral standard with a power second only to Philo's. Like Philo, the Talmud found a middle path between sensuality and mortification. It made the Jew sound and sober in mind and body, temperate, chaste, law-abiding. Moses received the Law or Ezra edited it, but it was the Talmud that made the Law Israel's. If Philo showed how to live as Jew and citizen in Alexandria, Mar Samuel, two centuries later, showed how to do the same in Nehardea. The Talmud has indeed preserved a large number and variety of personalities, representing every phase of what we have come to recognize as

Jewish characteristics. The Jew survives through the Talmud and the Talmud survives in him. It is Graetz's lasting merit that he disentangled for us the Talmudic personalities, and made them alive as individuals.

But, you may object, this line of argument leads us perhaps to an appreciation of what the Talmud did in the past. But, on the one hand, it ignores the defects and ill-effects of the Talmud, and on the other fails to explain how the good effects are continuous. In brief, the Talmud is a ritual code which many modern Jews find repugnant. They refuse it obedience. Yet it still holds its dead hand over Judaism. It is full of trivialities and superstitions. It not only possesses no permanent value, it is marked by a permanent tendency to destroy values. It encourages an excessive pietism. If it does not bury the spirit under the letter, it attaches too much importance to the letter. It is, in short, an obstacle to progress.

This is what the earlier reformers thought. They frankly rejected the Talmud. In his first sermon the late Professor Marks proclaimed this rejection, and declared, with thorough-going emphasis, that the Bible and the Bible alone is the authoritative and inspired guide to Jewish life.

Certainly, liberalism has taken the form of emancipation from Rabbinic rules and regulations and superstitions. The bonds had to be broken. Life was in fetters, and in order to move, the limbs had to be unshackled. This is undeniably true, and I am not denying it. Judaism needed simplification, emancipation. The Talmud represented the over-elaboration of ages unsympathetic to ours, and it also represented an obsolete system of control. The first generation of reformers

fought the battle of freedom and modernization for us as well as for themselves. But in the campaign for freedom and modernization there never are decisive victories. Each age has its own battle to fight, and in modern times the nature of the battle, the aims of the enemy, and the weapons available for defence, have been liable to very rapid fluctuations. In the past there were two lines of trenches against infidelity: the Bible and tradition. Tradition was evacuated, and the whole army was thrown forward into a single front line. Then the enemy—in the form of Biblical criticism—broke through the single line, and there were no reserves at the base to stay the onward sweep of the invader. Annihilation was in sight.

And, behold, it was the Talmud not so much in its actual contents as in its spirit—that came to our rescue. The second line of trenches was not really abandoned, but concealed and concentrated within it were forces more than a match for the hostile tactics. What broke through the Biblical line, through the old theory of inspiration? The conviction that the Bible is not equally authoritative or excellent in all its parts, that it may contain words of God, but is not in the conventional sense *the* word of God. Man had a hand in it. But if so, if man had a hand in the Bible, did not God perhaps have a hand in the tradition? If the Bible is not all of God, is the Talmud all of man?

This, I assert, is the great discovery of our time, and it is the Talmud that has helped us to the discovery. We meet a beautiful anticipation of the thought in Ben Sira (xxiv. 30). There is first the natural river, then man cuts a canal to draw off the water to irrigate his fields. Then lo, 'my stream became itself a river, and

my river became a sea '. The Talmud takes hold of this idea of action and reaction. I do not say that the Talmud gives this help explicitly. But it did give it implicitly. And therein I detect its permanent value. The problem of inspiration is the problem of the action and reaction of the human and the divine. God's spirit acts and man reacts to it. This divine action may be more conspicuous at some times than at others, and so may man's reaction sometimes be more, sometimes less, conspicuous. God's action is more conspicuous in great souls such as Moses and Isaiah, and we recognize in them a double portion of the divine creative spirit. Man's reaction is more conspicuous in great expositors such as Philo and Maimonides, and we recognize in them a double portion of the human receptive spirit. But creation and reception are only matters of degree, not of kind, and the continuity of the action and reaction is unbroken. It is not of a day, but of all time. When the Talmud said of the expositions of law by the two rival schools of Hillel and Shammai that both were speaking the words of the living God, when it said this, the Talmud demonstrated its penetrative understanding of the problem before us. Nay, more. When it described the so-called Oral Law as contemporaneous and continuous with the Written Law, when, besides accepting the Sinaitic origin of the Decalogue, it also spoke of ancient traditions as ' Laws of Moses from Sinai ', it practically solved the problem of authority.

There is, I concede, something paradoxical in a liberal like myself pouncing upon the phrase ' Laws of Moses from Sinai ', not to deride, but to acclaim it. But paradox is not necessarily absurdity. How the early liberals jeered at the phrase, ' Laws of Moses from Sinai ',

and not the liberals only, but the supposedly conservative founders of modern Jewish learning! To put the oral on the same footing as the written law! Did not the Gospels denounce the Pharisees, precisely because they preferred the tradition of the elders to the word of God? Yes, all this was said, and said wrongly. The Law and the tradition, the one shows more of God, the other of Israel, but both grew out of the action and reaction of God and Israel. Gilbert Murray holds that Homer was a traditional book, that it represents the accumulated poetic attitude of Hellas to its heroic past. This theory is disputed. But what is scarcely open to dispute is that the Bible is just such a traditional book, representing the accumulated spiritual attitude of Judea to its heroic continuity. The Bible took form as a tradition, and the tradition, up to a certain point, retained the Biblical quality of continuity. This same quality is expressed by the Talmud, more mystically, when it enjoins that every Israelite must esteem himself as having participated in the departure from Egypt. The thought is found already in the Mishnah, in a very old stratum of that work. Thus the continuity of the tradition is a continuity of personal experience, mystically conceived, as well as a continuity of law and its interpretation.

Here, then, we have the reason why the Talmud is, and must remain, permanently valuable to modern Jews. We turn to it for relief from the Codes founded on it. The Codes of Maimonides and Caro, the Strong Hand and the Table Prepared, omit the very element which made the Talmud so potent, so unique. The Codes reduce ritual and moral conduct to rule; the decisions are stated in precise paragraphs; they are

anonymous. But the Talmud presents processes as well as results; there is little of rule in it, less of precision; and the dicta are largely associated with the names of their authors. We see religious evolution in action. And just as it is in action in the older book, it remained in action until the Codes, especially after the invention of printing, introduced a finality of which the Talmud never dreamed. The Shulhan Aruch was printed soon after it was compiled. The claim put forward in recent times that the Talmud represents a more progressive Judaism than the Codes is well founded. For, as we have seen, the Talmud comes into line with modern theories of the evolution of religion. The effect of the Talmud, it has been objected, was to obscure the difference between Scripture and tradition. This may be true, but modern criticism (on quite other grounds) tends also to obliterate the distinction. The Scriptures themselves are a traditional evolution—so the newer science holds. The Talmud in essence anticipated this theory, not in the direction of belittling the divine character of the written text, but in the direction of magnifying the human part in the authorization, interpretation, and expansion of the message.

'God never made a Covenant with Abraham' and 'Moses never climbed Mount Sinai'. But these denials, though true, are not fatal; for they miss a sense in which affirmation is true. No Covenant with Abraham? The Talmudic spirit knows of a Covenant with us. 'For I have known him that he may command his children and household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord to do righteousness and justice to the end that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken to him.' No Covenant with

Abraham? There is an eternal Covenant of promise and obligation between God and Abraham's seed. Moses did not ascend Mount Sinai? The Talmudic spirit knows of an ascent by us. In every age Israel reaches the foot and struggles up the slope. Liberal Judaism discovers in the Talmudic spirit an escape from the liberalism which bases itself on literalities. The letter may kill the liberal as easily as it does the conservative. The Higher Criticism has done its best, I say best, not worst; for it has been a good thing for us to be taught the growth of Scripture. Superstitious elements were bound to be there because of this growth. The lower strata of the Bible are as inevitable as the upper strata. They belong to the evolution and are part of it, and affected it. But when the Higher Criticism has done its best, a Higher Truth emerges. Discredited by Science, the Bible rises into ampler credit than before, just because it records continuous revelation of God and progressive realization of Him by Israel, in the past and in the present. No Covenant, no ascent? Fidelity to the Covenant and energy in the ascent are Israel's duty and privilege. Beyond the reach of criticism, eternal is the call of these ideals, and the Talmudic spirit set them firm in the heart of every Jew.

You will observe that I am not vindicating the Talmud on sentimental grounds. In this case sentimentalism is misplaced. It almost invariably tends to gloom. Frug is an example. His fine Yiddish poem on the Talmud is a tearful lament uttered at the grave of the fathers. The old leaves, yellow and holed and spotted, charred and worn, have the appearance of a disused cemetery. No one who has really studied and loved the Talmud in youth thinks of it in Frug's

way afterwards. Lazar Oppenheim, late Professor of International Law in Cambridge, who had no more use than I for the Talmud as a ritual or legal guide, studied the Talmud in his youth and loved it as I shall to the end of life. Among his generous actions was his subscription for a complete Goldschmidt to be presented to a brilliant but impecunious student.

The Talmud is not, never was, a cemetery; it was, it is, a moving sea, on which sail the ships of living men. Commodities are borne on it from every clime. For long intervals, the Talmud was the chief means by which the Jew cultivated his mind. Some of the greatest Talmudists of the Middle Ages were indeed also devoted to science and philosophy, in the technical sense of these terms. But there were masses of Jews who had no other intellectual interest than the Talmud and the allied literature. The nature of the Talmud saved them from stagnation. For the Talmud's horizon is world-wide. It concerns itself with every phase of human activity. To read it intelligently was a liberal education in arts and sciences and philosophies. Kept in constant contact with actualities, the student's mind was alert. This alertness we still owe to the Talmud. It is of permanent value to us in our ambition to encourage our intellectualism. The dangers of intellectualism are patent, but they are as nothing in comparison to the dangers of sluggishness. The application of mind to the service of God—to adopt, as I so often adopt, Mr. C. G. Montefiore's phraseology—is a Talmudic invention. It was the Talmud that inserted into our prayer-book a praise of God as the gracious bestower of knowledge. One touch of mind makes all men akin, for wisdom is divine, and all men are thus one in God.

It was concerning gentile Sages that the Talmud introduced the benediction: 'Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who hast given of Thy wisdom to flesh and blood.' It was because of this intellectualism that the Talmud has carried over to liberals the right of private judgement. 'No man', wrote Maimonides to the Sages of Marseilles, 'must surrender his private judgement. The eyes are directed not backwards, but forwards.' Maimonides here reproduces the Talmudic spirit, the liberal spirit. In the second century Rabbi Joshua refused to budge from his opinion on a point of Law, though, at an opponent's appeal, miracle after miracle occurred. A carob-tree moved, a stream flowed backwards to its source, walls shook, and the daughter of the voice intervened. 'O tree, O stream, O walls, O daughter of the voice, what have ye to do with the matter? The Law is ours, it is not in heaven. *We* decide.' And God said: 'My children have vanquished me.' Grotesque this, but profound. Liberals have no interest in Rabbi Joshua's point of law, but his assertion of the rights of private judgement interests liberals very much.

If this were all, the result would be bewilderment. Each think for himself? Yes, but the community must think also. The Talmud tries to balance the right of the individual and the rights of the community, or rather, the Talmud avoided the pitfall of 'probabilism' into which Jesuitical casuistry fell, if Pascal's onslaught be fair. And yet the Talmud never disputed the individual's autonomy. It asserted majority rule, but the minority had a way of converting itself into a majority. The suppression of minority by majority was a modern perversion of the traditional spirit. For redress the liberal turns, and not in vain, to the Talmud.

The first five centuries were much freer, much less formal and cut-and-dried, much more alive to environment, much less restrictive, much less pedantic, than the last five centuries have been. Liberalism tacks itself on to the spirit of the Talmudic dialectics, rather than to the legalism of the Codes. There is nothing machine-made in the Talmud. It was a laboratory, not a factory.

You must not think that I am the only liberal who sees in the Talmud much that liberal Judaism can use fruitfully. Mr. C. G. Montefiore's new book, soon to appear, will, I trust, open the eyes of us all to the value of the Talmudic contribution to Judaism. The Talmud's defect is not that it contains narrow, sectarian prejudices. It contains these, but it was a lasting, almost criminal disservice of the Codes to disinter and perpetuate them. Just as with the Bible, so with the Talmud the ages have left their impress. There are strata of unequal merit. Maimonides and Caro should have eliminated bigotry, which had its historical excuse, but no right to survive. It has been committed as a task to the liberals to succeed where the Codifiers failed, to winnow chaff from grain, to disentangle the Talmudic verities from the infatuations. Maimonides did not always fail. He took the stray saying as to the salvation of the pious of all nations and elevated it into a principle. We can do the same with other hints. But above all its defects of casuistry and trifling and intolerance, the merits of the Talmud soar high. A discipline for the hallowing of life and the attainment of righteousness; a balance of authority and freedom, of law and licence; a democratic attitude towards social rank, a syncretism of the material and the spiritual; a refusal to draw too fast a moral line between secular and sacred, or to keep

God out of the daily round—to all this the Talmud shows the way more persuasively, more imitably, than do even the Hebrew prophets. The prophets were idealists, the Talmudists applied the ideals; Hosea was a visionary, Akiba was a man of the world. An anti-Semite in the year 1500 called the Talmud *seductor Iudeorum*—the seducer of the Jews. He meant that it seduced them from the Church to the Synagogue. Rather may we, liberals and conservatives alike, call it *salvator Iudeorum*, the saviour of the Jews.

Here I must end this lecture and this course. I am conscious that I have fallen far below my design. But with the author of the second book of the Maccabees I sincerely protest: 'If I have done well and to the point in my story, this is what I myself desire; but if meanly and indifferently, this is all I could attain unto.' To this I add, if my achievement has been mean and indifferent, my purpose was neither mean nor indifferent. I started by denying spiritual waste. I end with the same denial. It is not I who have invented this thought of permanent values. Let the inspired eloquence of Isaiah enforce what I have so weakly tried to echo. 'As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return to me void, saith the Lord, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.' Verily, the word returneth not void—it works its purpose in men's hearts and lives! For whatever comes forth from the spirit of God has a permanent value in the life of man.